

TOWARDS YORUBA SELF-DETERMINATION

YORUBA NATION CHOOSES THE NOBLE PATH TO ITS NOBLE GOAL

A MANUAL OF THE YORUBA SELF-DETERMINATION STRUGGLE FOR ALL
YORUBA SELF-DETERMINATION ADVOCATES AT HOME AND IN THE
DIASPORA

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Introduction

The following is a guide or manual for the use of all Yoruba patriots engaged in the struggle for Yoruba self-determination. It supplies to all supporters of the self-determination struggle the kinds of information that they will need to prosecute the struggle; and it supplies guides to the struggle's strategies and methods.

Though this manual was motivated in the context of one main organization, Ilana Omo Oodua, it is meant to be a fighting manual for all persons and organizations that are engaged in the struggle for Yoruba self-determination and sovereignty.

Very importantly, it is based on the fundamental character of the Yoruba nation as a civilization-building nation, a nation with good will and hospitality towards all other nationalities. It is also based on the humble and sincere obedience of all persons working for Yoruba self-determination to the manifest demand of the whole Yoruba nation – the demand that the struggle for Yoruba self-determination must be peaceful, law-abiding, knowledge-driven, purpose-driven and disciplined.

This manual is also intended to provide to the wide world the basic details of the Yoruba nation's reasons for now seeking to assert its self-determination and sovereignty separate from Nigeria – namely, the Yoruba people's devastating experiences in Nigeria, the progressive (and now almost total) destruction of democracy in Nigeria, the primitive and blood-curdling agenda of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Nigeria, the constant human brutalization, pains and death and regime of crimes against humanity in Nigeria, the altogether pulling of Nigeria relentlessly down into utter barbarism, a land of unimaginable, almost sub-human, viciousness of man against man, a land in which humans violently take all substance, all hope and all life from other humans with casual abandon hour by hour, a land in which human blood is spewed continually into a swelling stream of human blood. Having evolved and lived a life of civilized culture for thousands of years, a culture of tender respect for life, for property, for differences in human conditions, circumstances and choices, and for foreign peoples of different cultures and tongues, the Yoruba nation now seeks to

take its life into its own hands as a civilization-building nation in the world, and to save its people from further exposure to the Nigerian culture of brutality, destructiveness, perpetual violence upon religious freedom, relentless blood-letting, and the push towards utter barbarism.

Yoruba Nation's Glorious Past

We Yoruba nation came into Nigeria in 1914 with a great history. We had developed great intellectual traditions since millennia before then. The best in modern research has shown that we Yoruba had known Binary Mathematics and had been using it in times as early as 500 BC – which Binary Mathematics was not known to Europeans until recent times, and which became the basis for the making of the computer in the 1950s. Since the 9th century AD, we had been a progressively urbanizing people. By the time the first European explorers and traders came to the West African coast in about 1470 AD, we already had large towns and cities in almost all parts of our homeland – large towns and cities located at short distances from one another. By the 18th century, we were one of the most urbanized peoples in the world. In our towns and cities, we had evolved a sophisticated and gorgeous monarchical system of government, and societal and individual norms, known as Omoluabi, which clothed every individual with respect and a sense of duty, probity and responsibility, and a political system based on profound ideas of democracy – such as fundamental beliefs that power belongs to the people, that only the people can select their rulers, that while the people honour their rulers the rulers also seriously respect their people, that the individual has the right to express himself and contribute to decision making in society, that the individual is free to choose, practice and propagate his or her religious faith, that the foreigner deserves to be welcomed, accepted and included, etc. We had also evolved sophisticated economic systems featuring advanced farming, manufactures and crafts, the foremost art tradition in Black Africa, and a commercial culture featuring great trade in our homeland, as well as commercial links and Diaspora trading communities across most of tropical Africa.

When European missionaries brought the Christian message and Western education to Africa in the mid-19th century, our urban civilization made it possible for our Yorubaland to benefit much faster from the education than any other part of Africa. The first newspaper in Black Africa was published in our city of Abeokuta in 1859, and others soon followed in some of our other cities. By the 1860s we were already producing a growing class of university graduates and highly educated professionals. By 1914, the year of Nigeria's Amalgamation, we were already considerably rich in Western education, whereas schools did not come to most of the rest of Nigeria until the 1920s, by which time many Yoruba families were already producing their third generation of university graduates. No other Nigerian nationality produced their first university graduate until the mid-1930s. In the course of the 1950s, we Yoruba seriously expanded our lead in education by starting the first Free Education program in Nigeria and Africa, and we became the leader and pace-setter in most other aspects of modern development in Nigeria and in Africa.

Ours is a large and prestigious nation. At about 56 million in population in Nigeria, we are the largest single nationality in Nigeria and in Black Africa – even without counting the

millions of our Yoruba people in neighbouring Benin and Togo Republics. If we Yoruba of Nigeria were a country on our own today, our country would be one of the largest twenty countries in the world. Our homeland in Nigeria is larger than the territory of the United Kingdom, and larger than the territories of most countries of Europe and the world. Though our population is only 26% of Nigeria's population, we command over 50% of Nigeria's university graduates and a larger proportion of Nigeria's professionals. Our homeland accounts for over 65% of Nigeria's industrial capacity and productivity, and pays about the same proportion of federal taxes.

Yoruba Nation's Devastating Experiences in Nigeria

But since the independence of Nigeria in 1960, the prevailing trends in the management of Nigerian affairs have resulted in serious and relentless retrogression for all the peoples of Nigeria, including significantly our Yoruba nation. These trends have intensified viciously in recent years and are intensifying more and more today, and the universal prognosis concerning Nigeria points to worse and worse conditions of poverty, deprivation, insecurity, human suffering, and even outright barbarism – and ultimate dissolution.

Hereunder, as we bring before the international community the abominable horrors of our Yoruba people's experiences in Nigeria, a shocked world will concede that there is more than overwhelming justification for our seeking our nation's exit from Nigeria – and for our nation's exit from Nigeria. At Nigeria's independence in 1960, coldly calculated projections of British interests by British officials – of British need to continue to exercise major influences on the Nigerian economy after independence – produced sordid manipulations that imposed on Nigeria a federal government dominated by the Fulani of Northwestern Nigeria, the least educated Nigerian nationality, and the least ready to provide a progressive leadership to an ambitious modern country like Nigeria. Fulani fears of the much more educated Nigerian peoples (especially the Yoruba, the Igbo and some others) became the driving force behind the management of Nigerian affairs. Nigeria progressively descended into massive impunity, crooked manipulations of governmental processes, corruption, blatant and gross inequality amounting to gross abuses of most Nigerian peoples, efforts to use the powers of government to impose the fundamentalist Islamic religion of the rulers on peoples with various other religions (mostly Christians, moderate Muslims, and traditional religionists), massive abuses of human and religious freedom, fundamentalist Islamic terror, and widespread repression - most of these being inflicted on Nigerian peoples during long stretches of military dictatorships led by Northern military dictators.

In 1973, a military dictator called for elections in response to popular demands for return Nigeria to civilian rule. A rich Yoruba philanthropist won the presidential election resoundingly – surprisingly even in regions beyond his Yoruba home base. But just as the final election results were being announced, the military dictator showed up on national television and announced that the whole election was being annulled – without giving any reason for the annulment. A mighty democratic uproar, mostly based in the Yoruba parts of Nigeria, greeted his announcement. Overwhelmed, he reigned and handed over to a handpicked civilian – not the winner of the election. But another military officer stepped in and took over from the hapless civilian, and then proceeded with utter violence to suppress

the democratic response. State-created assassination gangs went after members of the Yoruba political elite, killed many of them in their homes or in the streets, and forced very many to flee abroad, where they lived as poor groups of exiles in various foreign countries for years – until the killer dictator died suddenly in mid-1998.

Inevitably, we Yoruba nation became intensively devastated by the deepening disaster of Nigeria. The military dictatorships seized important Yoruba assets that had been created in the 1952-62 democratic era in the Western Region – schools and hospitals that had been established by state governments, private agencies and individual persons and that had enjoyed very competent management by their founders. They also seized the proud university that the Yoruba people had built in Ile-Ife in 1959-62, as well as Yoruba crop export management systems, radio and television institutions, even the Yoruba regional sports stadium, etc. Most of such assets were then poorly managed or deliberately allowed to decline or even perish. Even though the Yoruba region continued to be the region commanding most of Nigeria's crumbling economy, ever intensifying poverty became the lot of the Yoruba people themselves. The quality of Yoruba political leadership rapidly declined, as many Yoruba leaders became sucked into the insensitive and horribly undemocratic governance, and the arrogant and all-pervading public corruption, that have become characteristic of Nigeria.

In these circumstances, the Yoruba people have been seriously hampered from exercising the spirit of enterprise and service to society for which their nation has been proud throughout its long history. In a Nigeria that is controlled by people with apathy or even hostility to modern Western education, the quality of Yoruba education has been essentially destroyed. Yoruba language has declined and now, according to scholars of language, faces the threat of extinction. To destroy Yoruba knowledge of and pride in their history, a Nigerian federal military government prohibited the teaching of History in schools. Agriculture became neglected, until farming has come to have in the Yoruba region the image of an occupation fit only for the aged, the poor and the illiterate – and until Yorubaland came to depend mostly on food importations. By 1962, cocoa exports by Yoruba farmers were the main source of funding for the Western Region's ambitious development programs and the main foreign exchange earner for Nigeria. By the early 1980s, Yoruba cocoa exports, under hostile control by the military dictatorships, had dwindled almost to zero. With the economy depressed, unemployment has escalated relentlessly among educated Yoruba youths, forcing many to go into crimes, into drug abuse, or into criminal cults, and forcing many more to flee to other countries in the world. Yoruba youths are regularly many among West African youths who, in desperation, attempt to reach southern Europe through the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea, and who regularly die in droves in the desert and the sea or end up in slavery in countries of the Maghrib.

In summary, the Yoruba people are experiencing a degree of poverty, of loss of morale, of hopelessness, and of disorientation, unknown before in their history. In spite of their very strong cultural unity, and in spite of their traditional unity around many exalted principles, the Yoruba almost constantly look disunited and conflict-prone in Nigeria. Largest in population in Nigeria and in Africa, the most educated people in Nigeria and Africa, and a nation with a very large and influential Diaspora in most countries of the world, the Yoruba

do often look like a small and impotent group in Nigeria. Increasingly, the Nigerian experience confronts the Yoruba region with the probability of a devastating revolt among the huge masses of its educated but unemployed and neglected youths.

Ultimately, the worst degradation suffered by the Yoruba nation in Nigeria began in 2014. Since then heavily armed Fulani herdsmen and militias from North-western Nigeria have been coming to Yorubaland and to the homelands of all the other peoples of the Nigerian Middle Belt and South, rampaging, destroying farms and villages, killing farmers and farmers' families, invading homes and holding husbands and fathers at gun point while raping their wives and daughters, inflicting gruesome wounds on women or killing them after raping them, threatening to conquer and subdue the indigenous owners of the land, threatening even to banish most peoples from their homeland or even to exterminate some. Hard to believe, the Nigerian Federal Government, the only controller of security forces in Nigeria (military, police and Secret Service) stolidly ignored these criminal activities of the Fulani marauders and terrorists, and seemed in fact to have ordered the security forces not to interfere with the marauders and terrorists – with the result that the marauders and terrorists are able to carry sophisticated assault rifles publicly.

The Fulani herdsmen and militias have been coming to seize land all over Yorubaland, threatening to banish the Yoruba from their homeland, and have been bringing countless Fulani folks from other countries of West Africa to seize and possess land in Yorubaland and other territories of the Middle Belt and South. Many Yoruba farmers have been forced to abandon farming altogether. Yoruba entrepreneurs who embark on modern farming enterprises are regularly targeted and their enterprises destroyed, burnt down and otherwise vandalized by the Fulani marauders – and the farm owners themselves killed. The intensive marauding in the Middle Belt, where the killings have been most virulent and where hundreds of thousands of farming people have been displaced from their villages to Internally Displaced People's Camps, threatens to cut off most of the traditional Middle Belt food supplies to the Yoruba Southwest and other parts of the South. United Nations agencies are predicting a devastating famine in Nigeria and Yorubaland starting from late 2020. The Fulani rampages are thus putting unbearable pressures on the already weakened Yoruba economy in general.

Even the large Yoruba cities have come under these disasters too, as millions of uneducated and unskilled youths, as well as masses of beggars, are being deliberately pushed by some influential Fulani persons to migrate to the Yoruba Southwest, where they are building up into a devastating burden on Yoruba society and economy. Having deliberately failed to provide modern education for their people, the Fulani leadership of the Northwest is now pushing millions of their uneducated and unskilled youths as well as beggars to the South, especially to the Yoruba Southwest. Even under the desperately necessary federal ban on inter-state travel in an attempt to control the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, many thousands of the Northern youths, sometimes accompanied or followed by truck loads of sophisticated weapons, are being increasingly trucked into Yorubaland where they have been establishing terrorist hide-outs in the farmlands and forests.

With the hostile and marauding terrorist Fulani thus dug into, and digging more and more into, hundreds of hideouts in the Yoruba farmlands and forests, with the massive build-up of illiterate and unskilled Northern youths and beggars in all Yoruba towns and cities, with the discovery by the police that many of these youths carry concealed assault weapons supplied to them from their home areas in the Northwest, with continuing Fulani destruction of Yoruba farms, villages and farmsteads, the killings of Yoruba farmers and rural folks, the Fulani kidnapping and killing of people in rural areas and along highways, the increasing abandonment of farming by Yoruba farmers, and the escalation of home-grown crime under the cover of the Fulani invasion, the whole Yoruba nation feels as if it is being strangled in Nigeria today. The traditionally democratic Yoruba people can no longer hope to change these situations by any democratic elections, since Nigerian elections are now always hideously concocted with the massive violence and corruption that government agencies and powerful officials and politicians bring into every election – even in the presence, and to the consternation, of foreign observers from international agencies and leading countries of the world.

Altogether, Nigeria seems now to have advanced to the precipice of a terminal cataclysm – a huge, unimaginably fiendish and all-devastating holocaust. In spite of Nigerian Federal Government's claims that the fundamentalist terrorist organization, Boko Haram, is being fought and reduced in the Nigerian Northeast, the manifest reality is that Boko Haram has been flourishing and expanding and now stands at the peak of its power. The Nigerian armed forces cannot, or (as most non-Fulani Nigerians believe) do not want to, win any decisive victory against Boko Haram. From many reports, the official policy of recruiting "converted" Boko Haram terrorists into the Nigerian army is giving Boko Haram a chance to target and destroy indigenous military officers and service men (including Yoruba) within the armed forces. Meanwhile, dangerous foreign terrorist organizations have entered onto the scene – ISIS from the lands of their defeat in Iraq and Syria, and Al Qaida (from Al Qaida in the Islamic Maghrib, AQIM) from Libya. Some sort of collaboration has manifestly evolved, linking the Fulani marauding forces, Boko Haram, ISIS and Al-Qaida, for the purpose of overrunning all of Nigeria, imposing Fulani and other terrorists and fundamentalists as rulers over all the indigenous nationalities of Nigeria, then employing the resources of Nigeria to overrun all of West Africa, to convert West Africa into the base of fundamentalist terror against the rest of the world.

Towards these ends, Boko Haram and ISIS cells have spread over all of the Nigerian Far North and Middle Belt, bringing devastating violence to many parts of the Nigerian North, and are being discovered in parts of the Nigerian South, including the Yoruba Region of Southwestern Nigeria. The United States warned in early March 2021 that ISIS was preparing to launch a major attack on Southern Nigeria, beginning from the Yoruba cosmopolitan city of Lagos.

There is an all- pervading danger and fear that a particularly horrible future awaits Nigeria – a future in which mass killings become the norm, in which Fulani and other terrorists are killing in large numbers, maiming, raping, and destroying, and Fulani folks, guilty of violence or not, are feared and resented and treated as dangerous elements, and set upon and killed, among most peoples of Nigeria.

A horribly complex web of dark and menacing clouds has thus been woven into the sky over Nigeria, and it is being compounded relentlessly, portending unimaginable horror that could spread ruin and horrific human suffering over the whole of West Africa.

For the enlightenment of an increasingly shocked world, we must add that the Fulani rampages in Nigeria are today's phase of the ancient war of western Asiatic and later Arab and Arab-related peoples upon the peoples of the Black African Race, the war that suppressed the original Black builders of the civilization of Ancient Egypt, the war that has, since the 7th century AD, been persistently pushing the Black peoples from the territories of North Africa and the Nile Valley towards the south. The latest major victory of the invaders was the 19th century Fulani conquest of the large Hausa nation – the largest Black nation north of the River Niger. The Hausa people, being mostly Muslims, made the mistake of regarding the Fulani war of ethnic conquest as a war for the reform and expansion of Islam, and they therefore massively supported the Fulani invaders and thereby helped the conquest of their own nation by a comparatively few Fulani. As things stand today, the once splendid Hausa nation has been ruthlessly pulverized and destroyed; every ancient Hausa kingdom is ruled by Fulani Emirs; every state in Hausaland in Nigeria is ruled by a Fulani State Governor; and the Fulani policy of rejection of Western education has now produced the grotesque social phenomenon of *almajiri* (millions of uneducated, unskilled and abjectly poor millions of Hausa people who live as beggars in the streets). Many significant Fulani voices are now saying that the Hausa nation has disappeared and that only the Hausa language has survived. The Fulani are now striving to expand that kind of conquest and destruction to the lands of all the indigenous African peoples of the Nigerian Middle Belt and South, and even of all of West and Central Africa. Take note that what the Fulani are doing now in Nigeria they are also doing in Central African Republic, and that if they succeed in subduing the major indigenous Yoruba and Igbo nations and the smaller nations of the Nigerian Delta and Middle Belt Regions and then control the enormous resources of Nigeria, they will be able to overrun all the rest of West Africa. Take note also, that the Fulani, finding the indigenous Black nations of Nigeria too tough, have now brought international terrorists from the Middle East (ISIS from Iran, Iraq and Syria, Al Qaida from the Islamic Maghrib, and Al Shabaab from Somalia) into the Nigerian war. And finally and very importantly, note that the Nigerian Federal Government under a Fulani President, Muhammadu Buhari, has systematically replaced non-Fulani officials with Fulani officials in the commanding positions in all agencies of the Nigerian Security Services – Army, Police, Secret Service, Ports Authority, Customs Service, etc – and says and does nothing as ISIS and Al Qaida are reported to be bringing large quantities of weapons into Nigeria from Iran, Turkey, and Iraq, even as the United States Government has raised the alarm that ISIS has penetrated Nigeria from the Atlantic coast, and even as ISIS, Al Qaida and the home-grown terrorist organization, Boko Haram, have occupied and seized Niger State in central Nigeria, next door to the Nigerian Federal Capital Territory, and only a short drive from the Nigerian Federal Capital city of Abuja. For the Black peoples of Africa and the world, the war of resistance by the Yoruba, Igbo, the peoples of the Nigerian Delta and Middle Belt, is a war that must be won decisively.

A brief historical outline at this point will help the reader's understanding of the whole Nigerian situation. The constitutional framework for all the aberrations in the management of Nigeria is the gradual and relentless destruction of the federal order under which Nigeria had become independent in 1960. Until 1945, the British creators of Nigeria had pursued no clear policy for welding Nigeria together as one country, and the result had been that the two distinct sections of the country (North and South) had essentially gone their different directions. The constitutions that were written in 1949-51 by the British for Nigeria became the first constitutions uniting Nigeria as one country. Out of deference to the great ethnic diversity of Nigeria, these constitutions ordered Nigeria as a federation – a federation of three Regions (the North remaining as one territorially overwhelmingly large Region, while the smaller but more thickly populated South was split into two Regions, Eastern and Western). Each Region was more or less autonomous, managed its affairs with its elected officials ruling under British supervision, controlled its own resources, developed in its own way and at its own pace, had its own coat of arms and flag, and even had a High Commissioner to represent its interests in London. At different times between 1957 and 1959, the three Regions were granted their Self Government and each appointed its indigenous Regional Governor to replace the supervising British official. Under this Regional arrangement, the three Regions competed lustily in development efforts, and achieved considerable socio-economic development for themselves and for Nigeria. The British manifestly preferred and manipulated the Fulani to be controllers of the large Northern Region as well as of the Federal Government, even though the Fulani were a small part of the Northern Region, one of the smallest nationalities in Nigeria, and were the least educated and most resistant to modern education among the peoples of Nigeria. That did not slow down the pace of development in the two Regions of the South – the Eastern and Western Regions. In fact, the predominantly Yoruba Western Region immediately shot ahead of the other Regions in the development race, developed the most competent Civil Service in the country, led in infrastructural development, in industrialization, and in the provision of health and educational services, and even occasionally granted loans to the Federal Government. In 1955, the Western Region achieved the most significant development of all by starting Free Primary School Education – the first Free Education program in Nigeria and in Africa.

But, in a Nigeria that was dominated by the Fulani, with British support, the Western Region was destined to pay a heavy price for its frontline achievements. British colonial officials developed a more or less open hostility towards the Western Region's Yoruba leadership, and saw the Western Region's achievements as questioning the competence of the British colonial government and as poised to obstruct British influence in Nigeria after independence. The Western Region's political leaders were therefore excluded, by British manipulations, from the Federal Government that led Nigeria into independence. Immediately after independence, the Fulani controllers of the Federal Government decided that the Western Region needed to be subdued by federal power, and be robbed of its capability to run always in the far front. This resulted in a federal covert operation which, assisted by the British, split the typically disciplined Yoruba political leadership of the Western Region. The Federal Government then hurriedly barged in, declared that law and order had broken down in the Western Region, declared a state of emergency there, imposed a federally appointed Sole Administrator, and sent the topmost Yoruba political leader to

prison on trumped-up treasonable charges. That was the beginning of the attack on Regional autonomy and on the federal principle in Nigerian affairs – and the beginning of the misfortunes of the Yoruba nation in Nigeria.

After lifting the Emergency, the Federal Government engaged in crooked efforts to impose over the Western Region, rigged elections, some persons who were prepared to be servile to federal and Fulani control. Outraged, Yoruba youths burst out in late 1965 in a powerful and stubborn revolt that shook Nigeria to its foundations. The collapse of all order led to the first military take-over of government in Nigeria, and started over three decades of military coups and military dictatorships. Since the Northern controllers of the Federal Government had ensured a Northern preponderance among the military officers, succeeding coups were led by Northern officers, and the resulting military rulers collaborated with the Fulani political elite to gradually suck all power and resource control into the hands of the Federal Government, and to fragment the old Regions into small impotent ‘states’ – in summary, to foist a Northern or Fulani dictatorship upon Nigeria. In 1999, all the over-centralization was finally enshrined in a constitution which a Northern military dictator unilaterally produced and imposed on Nigeria by a decree, claiming that it was written by “we the people” of Nigeria. Virtually all significant leaders of the peoples of the South and Middle Belt, constituting about 75% of the population of Nigeria, have denounced the 1999 constitution as a fraud, and demanded constitutional ‘restructuring’ that would return Nigeria to federalism. A visiting United Nations rapporteur commented in 2019 that the Nigerian 1999 Constitution is a “pressure cooker” for injustice, protests and conflict.

But the federal controllers have not only truculently rejected ‘restructuring’, they have meanwhile adopted uttermost impunity in the appointment of federal officials, resulting in the very troubling outcome, as we said before, that as of the beginning of 2021, under a Fulani President of Nigeria, the Fulani and allied Northern elements head all security agencies in Nigeria – the military, the police, the Secret Service, the Ports Authority, the Customs Service, the Immigration Service, the federal judiciary, etc. By law, individual Nigerians can only buy foreign exchange from persons holding the license to sell, and, in all parts of Nigeria, such licensees are Fulani or Hausa. No aspect of power or resource control is allocated exclusively to state governments. The Federal Government is given control of full 68 constitutional subjects of power and control (called the federal exclusive list) out of the 98 items in the constitution. The remaining 30 items are classified as ‘concurrent list’ – that is, subjects over which the federal and state governments concurrently have control – with the provision that, whenever federal and state interests collide, the federal shall take precedence. The State Governments are thus given exclusive control over nothing in the 1999 Constitution. For instance, the State Governor is described as the Chief Security Officer of his state – but the Federal Government also has power over security in the state, and the Fulani-controlled Federal Government can therefore countermand whatever security measure the State Governor authorizes in his state. Altogether, this is an apartheid system of government, with a small section of Nigeria holding to all power and control and the indigenous peoples of the country, amounting to 75% of Nigeria’s population, being ruled as conquered peoples. The ongoing invasion of the homelands of all indigenous peoples of Nigeria by armed Fulani herdsmen working with Fulani militias from all over West Africa, plus the collaboration of these with Boko Haram, ISIS, and Al Qaida, plus the imposition of

Fulani appointees on all security agencies in Nigeria, and plus federal authority countermanning States' security measures for the protection of States' citizens, all together are designed to facilitate and complete the total subjugation of all the indigenous peoples of Nigeria. This is a Fulani ethnic agenda; but the infusion by the Fulani of some Islamic purpose into the whole picture is helping to confuse some Muslim citizens of the invaded territories and therefore somewhat helping the invasion.

However, Yoruba people are now aware that among the Yoruba persons who have had their farms and villages destroyed, and who have been killed, raped, kidnapped, etc, there have been more Muslims than non-Muslims together. Moreover, in the statements which the Fulani organizations (Fulani Nationality Movement, Myetti Allah, and others) frequently issue to threaten the indigenous peoples of Nigeria, Yoruba Muslims are always described as infidels, unreliable people, and persons deserving to be killed and destroyed. Therefore, all Yoruba people – Muslims, Christians, Isese – are now fully aware that the Fulani invasion is simply a Fulani ethnic invasion, has no sincere Islamic purpose, and is only using Islam as its ideological weapon.

The total picture as it has fully developed then, is as follows: The Nigerian Federal Government, under a Fulani President of Nigeria, is relentlessly being turned into an instrument of the Fulani ethnic group and its agenda. Fulani and other militiamen imported in large masses into Nigeria and masquerading as herdsmen, all armed with sophisticated weapons, are ruthlessly ravaging the homelands of the indigenous peoples of Nigeria (including, surprisingly, the Hausa people whose homeland the Fulani have controlled since the 19th century) and killing men, women and children, destroying farms and villages and other assets of rural life, making a point of raping very many women in order to destroy the sense of self respect of the various peoples, cutting down or burning tree crops, uprooting and destroying root crops, kidnapping people and extorting large amounts of money for ransom, and killing kidnap victims even after the ransom has been paid. In all this, to say that these Fulani marauders are herdsmen and not terrorists in this situation is to perpetrate and promote a dangerous and destructive falsehood. Democracy has thus been effectively killed in Nigeria. In the situation, the elections are no democratic exercises; they are mere affirmations of the despotic imposition of the control by a small section of Nigeria; and, to repeat, they are always executed with massive official manipulations and rigging, massive use of bribes to electoral officials, massive buying of 'votes', and massive use of violence.

To ensure maximum effectiveness for their invasion, the Fulani terrorists began in 2019 to collaborate with well known terrorist organizations - Boko Haram, ISIS, Al Qaida and Al Shabaab. By 2020, terrorists from these organizations were already, in the company of the Fulani terrorists, terrorizing all indigenous peoples of Northern Nigeria, and were soon identified in far southern places like Southwestern and Southeastern Nigeria.

The Fulani-led Federal Government of Nigeria never intervenes to resist any of this terrorism; in fact the experience of the victims of the terrorism has commonly been that federal security agencies hardly ever intervene to protect them against the terrorists. In fact, the operatives of the federal agencies are frequently reported as colluding with the Fulani killers. A former non-Fulani Nigerian Minister of Defence, General T.Y Danjuma, publicly

alerted non-Fulani Nigerians in 2019 that they must cease hoping and waiting to be protected by the federal security agencies, that the Nigerian military was not only not defending victims of the Fulani terror but actually colluding with the killers, that the victims should defend themselves and their homes, and that those who relied on federal agencies to defend them would all simply be killed one by one.

Moreover, wherever any non-Fulani people take any step for defending themselves against the Fulani and other terrorists, the Fulani-led Federal Government intervenes immediately to countermand such measures. For instance, when the state governments of the Yoruba Southwest legally created a local defence organization named Amotekun, the Federal Government denounced it as illegal and proceeded in various ways to make it ineffective. And when the Governor of Ondo State ordered that Fulani terrorists that have criminally dug themselves into some of the deep forests of Ondo State (forests legally designated as Official Reserves since British colonial times) should evacuate those forests, the Federal Government responded immediately that the Governor did not have any exclusive authority to make such an order. The Nigerian police would not order the disarming of the Fulani marauders, but it has ordered that citizens in the embattled regions should surrender any guns that they might possess – including guns that any of their citizens have license to possess. Officials of the Federal Government have repeatedly advised non-Fulani peoples to save their lives by simply surrendering their land and freedom to the Fulani-led terrorists. Ordinary Fulani organizations, such as Myetti Allah, are thus able to threaten even State Governments for daring to make laws protecting their citizens against the Fulani terror. The Fulani are constantly threatening that they are prepared to keep this terror campaign going for years, decades or even centuries if necessary, until they have seized all the land of the peoples of Nigeria and until they have subjugated or exterminated the owners of the land.

By early 2021, the Fulani elite of Northwestern Nigeria, obviously surprised by the escalating strength of the homeland self-defence that was being demonstrated in the South against the Fulani and their allied terrorists, began to elevate, and thereby expose, their hitherto surreptitious support for the Fulani terrorists. While no member of the Fulani elite has ever condemned (or even seemed to notice) the Fulani outrages in the South, many of them began a campaign of condemnation against the Southern victims of Fulani terrorism who were defending their homes. Many Fulani elders, organizations and State Governors and others have been striving hard to turn the truth upside down and to paint the Southerners and not the Fulani as the destroyers of peace and security in Nigeria. Leaders of Fulani-led Northern organizations even called on the Federal Government to deploy the army to the Southwest for the purpose of “defending Northerners in the South”! And the State Governors of the Fulani-led North of Nigeria issued statements claiming that the defensive attacks on Fulani marauders in the South were destroying the spirit of ‘peaceful co-existence’ in Nigeria. One governor made the alarming statement that the Fulani herdsmen have been carrying AK47 rifles because they need such weapons for self defence, and that the herdsmen in the deep Ondo State forests are not subject to the authority of the Ondo State Governor. In these ways, the Fulani elite have left no doubt at all about the true roots of, and source of support for, the Fulani invasions of the Middle Belt and South and the involvement of foreign terrorist groups (ISIS and Al Qaida) in the terrorism in Nigeria. Because of the universalist nature of Yoruba civilization, many Yoruba persons have been hesitant to believe that the Fulani marauding

has been a planned invasion; but now most of such Yoruba persons are no longer deceived. The Fulani elite have now totally destroyed any basis of confidence or hope that the peoples of Nigeria can ever again co-exist peacefully in this same country of Nigeria.

As matters stand today, even though some of the nationalities under attack are bravely putting up various levels of resistance, the combination of the Fulani marauders and the international terrorist organizations, with various kinds of assistance by the Nigerian federal government agencies and the Fulani political elite, is succeeding considerably in disrupting most parts of the Nigerian Middle Belt and South. Thousands of citizens of the Middle Belt are piling into Internally Displaced Peoples Camps. Unknown before in Yoruba history, some thousands of Yoruba people, violently displaced from their villages and farmlands, are showing up as refugees in countries beyond Nigeria. The disruptions are thus beginning to spread beyond Nigeria to other countries of West Africa. Fundamentalist terror is beginning its spread from Nigeria across West Africa.

In general, the Fulani-controlled Federal Government concerns itself very little with socio-economic development or defence of citizens, and focuses most of its energy on controlling, coercing and subduing the citizens and peoples of Nigeria. For instance, its efforts to control and subdue the masses of educated youths of the Nigerian South have given birth to a grotesque unit of the federal police – the unit known as SARS. The function of SARS has been to keep the masses of educated youths submissively peaceful by going after them with unimaginable brutality. SARS operatives commonly stop youths in the streets and very roughly or even violently handle them – or even kill some. SARS operatives would stop a public bus, and order the youths in it to disembark for questioning and searching. Commonly in such encounters, possession of books or sophisticated telephones or laptop computers is taken as proof that a young man or woman is involved in criminal activities – and as sufficient reason to arrest, beat or even kill him or her. Especially in the states of the Yoruba Southwest, very many families have horrible stories to tell about the bestialities and murders that their sons and daughters have suffered in the hands of SARS operatives.

At last in October 2020, the youths started peaceful protests aimed at getting the Federal Government to scrap SARS. The biggest of the protests occurred in the cosmopolitan Yoruba city of Lagos. These were mostly educated youths, many of them university graduates, and their protest was impressively peaceful and orderly. If, for instance, they generated some trash when they stopped to eat and drink on a street, they never moved on without clearing up their trash. Members of the public were so impressed that many came out to give gifts of food, drinks and even money to the protesters. But then, on October 20 evening, as the youthful protesters were sitting in a popular road patch at the Lekki Toll Gate, waving small Nigerian flags and singing the Nigerian national anthem, soldiers of the Nigerian army suddenly arrived and started to shoot into their midst. How many youths were killed that evening has not been verified (because the official cover-up has been very strong). The government and government agencies claim that there were no casualties, but eye witnesses, international media bodies, witnesses at an on-going Lagos State official Public Enquiry, and parents, have been insistently claiming that many corpses from the scene of the shooting were received in certain Lagos hospitals that night. That, these days, is the character of Nigeria's governance.

Growing International Interventions in the Nigerian Situation

From about mid-2019, representatives of the ‘Nigerian Indigenous Nations Alliance for Self-determination’ (NINAS) (of which the Yoruba nation is a strong member), began to make serious contacts with high-level officials of the United States Government in Washington DC as well as the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The United Nations, the United States, various other concerned governments and agencies of the International Community, began to take far-reaching steps in response to the increasingly troubling situation in Nigeria. Examples include:

(1) In August 2019, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Nigeria, Agnes Callamard, led a Visitation to Nigeria to investigate widespread killings, rapes, kidnappings and Extra-Judicial Killings going on in Nigeria. In September 2019, she wrote in her report that the Constitutional Arrangements of Nigeria (as enshrined in the 1999 Nigerian Constitution) were like a Pressure-Cooker for Injustice, and that Nigeria was now a threat to Global Security because, should Nigeria of 200 Million People unravel due to those pressures, the world would have an unprecedented Refugee Crisis to manage, and the Global Terror Networks including ISIS and Al-Qaeda that were already involved in Nigeria, would step more fully into the large swathes of ungoverned spaces that would emerge in Nigeria and might thereby re-invigorate their Global Terror Campaign.

(2) Following the June/July 2019 International Religious Freedom (IRF) Ministerial Roundtables in Washington DC, the United States on the 19th of December 2019 placed Nigeria on a Special Watch-List for the Ethno-religious Killings being perpetrated in Nigeria in gross infraction of International Religious Freedom.

(3) In March 2020, the US State Department listed Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) for the escalation in Ethno-religious Killings, and this was followed by the June 2, 2020 Executive Order on Advancing International Religious Freedom, issued under the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, in which Nigeria fell into all the parameters and threshold of Remedial Interventions Listed in the Executive Order.

(4) In a media briefing in 2020 by Major-General Digvan Anderson, reported by the Nigerian newspaper, *Vanguard*, of August 5, Major-Gen. Anderson said, “Lagos and the Southern Nigerian Coast shall shortly be invaded by incoming International Jihadists, including Al Qaeda and Islamic State, (ISIS)”.

(5) In late November 2020, following the Nigerian Army’s shooting of peaceful protesters in Lagos, the international television house, CNN, launched a special investigation into the shooting and furnished the world with clear and powerful details of the event, including details from satellite pictures.

(6) In a more important step, on December 7, 2020, the US Secretary of State formally designated Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern for Terror, placing Nigeria in the league of State Sponsors of Terror, along with Iran, Afghanistan and others.

(7) In the same December 2020, the Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Fatih Bensoudou, announced that the situation in Nigeria provided justification for ICC Investigating Nigeria for Crimes against Humanity and the Complicity of Government in the activities of Boko Haram, ISWAP, Fulani Herdsmen and other Terror Networks Operating in Nigeria.

(8) The Worsening ethno-religious killings in Nigeria and the mounting evidence of the complicity of the Federal Government of Nigeria and its Security Forces prompted a December 2020 Public Hearing in the United States by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

(9) In the same December 2020, a top Commander of the US Special Operations Command in Africa, Major-General Digvan Anderson, warned that the Global Terror Group, Al-Quaeda was making its way into Nigeria through the North-West flank down towards Southern Nigeria in an invasion that would link with the ISIS-driven ISWAP/Boko Haram terrorism already ravaging Nigeria from the North East flank of Nigeria.

(10) In a November 2020 Letter to the Government of the United Kingdom by the UK House of Lords, the House of Lords recommended Investigations into the Complicity of the Federal Government of Nigeria in the widespread killings being carried out by the so-called Fulani Herdsmen and other Terror Networks operating in Nigeria, including Boko Haram.

(11) On November 24, 2020, a report on the front page of a Nigerian newspaper read, "ENDSARS: UK Lawmakers slam Buhari regime, demand sanctions."

(12) In April-May 2021, the United States issued an alert that ISIS and its allies have infested Southern Nigeria from the coast.

(13) In April-May 2021, both the United States and the United Kingdom issued travel advisories to their citizens, advising them to avoid travelling to Nigeria because of the terribly poor security conditions in Nigeria.

We Yoruba Have Now Decided to Liberate Our Nation

We Yoruba nation do not want to continue to be partakers in this prolonged and escalating barbarism in Nigeria, or to be partakers in the ultimate and imminent Nigerian cataclysm. Our 55 million Yoruba people are products of a very ancient urban civilization, of an outstanding culture that is being imitated and emulated more and more across the world, of a very old tradition of religious toleration, harmony and calm, of deeply respected hospitality to all foreign nationals, and of great ambitions to be part of the modern world and to give mightily to human civilization. Two American researchers (Gerald McLoughlin and Clarence Bouchat) who recently did a study of Nigeria for an agency of the American government, wrote: "The Yoruba serve as a modern example of coexistence, since many Muslim, Christian and animist Yoruba dwell peacefully, not only in the same cities, but also in the same households". A London University scholar, Professor J.D.Y. Peel, at the end of many years of studying Youbaland in Nigeria, wrote the following memorable statements in a 2016 article:

“The Yoruba greatly pride themselves on their religious toleration, and it is an outlook that has roots in their traditional religion - - -. The tree which has yielded the poisonous fruit that we see in Boko Haram could never grow in Yoruba soil”. He also wrote that the Yoruba people are characterized by an unusually focused push for modern development.

Yoruba people want to control their self determination in order to be able to keep Nigeria’s looming horror away from their homeland, and in order to be able to develop in their own way and at their own pace as a significant part of the modern world.

In loyalty to the ancient Yoruba culture of hospitality and help to foreigners, peaceful non-Yoruba Nigerians, Fulani and all, who are hitherto peacefully resident in our Yorubaland and are willing to continue so, no matter their nationality, can be sure of our hospitality, protection and even friendship now, and will enjoy the protection of the laws and other assets of a Yoruba nation-state, to live their lives, raise their families, and pursue their occupations and businesses. We Yoruba people therefore deserve the understanding and support of the rest of the world in our noble venture of self-determination..

In spite of all our devastating experiences in Nigeria, we Yoruba nation and people harbor no malice, no hatred, no bitterness, and no grudge against Nigeria or against any Nigerian people. We are taking some civilized and cautious steps just now for protecting our farming populations against the Fulani destruction of farms and villages, and against killings, raping, and kidnapping. The central piece of these steps is Amotekun, under which some carefully selected persons are being properly trained and led to contain marauding and crimes in the Yoruba farmlands. But we nevertheless preserve our culture of hospitality to foreigners, with the result that large numbers of peaceful, law-abiding and enterprising persons from other parts of Nigeria are regularly settled in our homeland, are streaming to our homeland, are prospering there, and are sure that their Yoruba hosts will protect them.

Most Yoruba people now strongly desire their Yoruba nation’s self-determination, autonomy and sovereignty, separate from Nigeria. For us Yoruba, this is a noble goal. And our nation’s guiding philosophy is that those who seek the noble goal must seek to reach it by the noble path – the path of love and peace among men. Therefore, all of us who are contributing to the striving for the Yoruba nation’s noble goal are committed to serving in the way that our Yoruba people truly desire - to achieve change by peaceful means and by respect to the laws of the Nigerian state and the laws and conventions of the international community. We are confident that reaching the goal through such peaceful and law-abiding means is achievable by us. We are confident that we Yoruba command the cultural, human, intellectual, professional and diplomatic capabilities to achieve our goal peacefully and lawfully.

Needless to say, it is not out of fear that we have chosen the peaceful, law-abiding and altogether noble path; it is out of deliberate policy engendered by our Yoruba nation’s civilization. We are sure that all who know us know that we can creditably and successfully defend ourselves if we are compelled to. What we are saying is that there is no need to compel us to – no need to start violence and war over a change that is now obviously inevitable. In uttermost sense of responsibility, we Yoruba urge all of Nigeria’s various peoples to be realistic; we believe that all of us should, and can, seek to separate peacefully

and be friendly neighbours in all our future, and that we do not have to turn the valleys of the Niger and Benue into a region of perpetual discord, conflicts, wars and blood-letting – a region of constant worry to the world.

We repeat that the desire of our people for our nation’s self-determination and autonomy is not borne out of any kind of negative emotions. It is borne out of our desire to revive our capabilities and the beauties of our life in a setting of our own, to retrieve the democratic essence of our nation’s character, and to return to our civilization-building orientation and strength, so that we may lift up our people in the world and, as we rise in education, economy, science, literature, the arts, the sciences and the heights of technology, we may impart the same strengths to our neighbors in all directions, and impart real and lasting value to our world. Our desire is a totally noble desire. It is a desire worthy of support by all persons and peoples of good will in the world. And we who serve in the struggle for Yoruba self-determination, as servants of our Yoruba nation in this historic moment, have committed ourselves to the Yoruba nation’s noble struggle towards the Yoruba nation’s noble goal.

This is an All-Yoruba Mass Struggle.

The Yoruba self-determination struggle is a mass movement of the Yoruba people – at home in the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria, in the Yoruba Diaspora in most countries of the world, and even in the non-Nigerian Yoruba homeland in Benin and Togo Republics (although the main movement in Nigeria has needed to tread carefully in Benin and Togo, in order not to offend the friendly world power of France).

In early 2019, masses of Yoruba people of Benin Republic, including Obas, intellectuals, professionals, politicians and great numbers of common people, assembled in Ajase (Porto Novo) and founded a national organization with the name of Egbe Omo Oduduwa. Some invited Yoruba leaders and Obas from Nigeria were present or sent representatives; Prof. Banji Akintoye from Nigeria was keynote speaker. Since then, Benin Republic Yoruba people have held many popular rallies to demand what they call a “return home”.

In typical Yoruba fashion, the Yoruba people of Nigeria and the Diaspora outside of Africa have founded hundreds of organizations in a short period of time for contributing to the self-determination struggle. Of formerly existing civic organizations, many have endorsed and joined the self-determination struggle, bringing their wealth of experience to the struggle.

When the self-determination movement called for Yoruba rallies to highlight the Yoruba self-determination demand on Nigeria’s Independence Day, October 1, 2020, an estimated 4.2 million Yoruba protesters held mass rallies in Nigeria and in 166 countries across the world. In some countries, the protesters carried through the streets earthen pots that were painted in the colours of the Nigerian flag, and then gathered at a major city centre and ritually smashed the pots to pieces – to symbolize the breaking up of Nigeria. In some other countries, the protesters ritually ripped up the Nigerian flag.

By February 2021, news came that the first generation Yoruba Diaspora in the Americas (consisting of descendants of the Yoruba Diaspora of the Atlantic Slave Trade era, 16th to 19th

century) had stepped into the Yoruba self-determination struggle. From Uruguay, there came an announcement that these Yoruba descendants, from forty countries of the Americas, had entered into the Yoruba struggle, ready to come to the support of their Yoruba ancestral homeland in Nigeria.

We Perceive that the Peaceful & Law-abiding Path is Open

In general, it used to be that any kind of ethnic nationalist activity was regarded as a taboo in Nigeria, and was treated as a crime. But that has changed considerably in recent years, because Nigerians are becoming more and more aware of the legitimate rights of nationalities in the world, as well as the duties and responsibilities of nationalities to seek to achieve their goals by peaceful and law-abiding means.

Violence is no longer really inevitable or even necessary in the Nigerian situation. Even seeking the separation of one's ethnic nation from Nigeria does not necessarily have to be accompanied by violent riots, armed and violent insurrection, defiance of the law, and criminal or terroristic language. The problem is that most Nigerian ethnic nationalist activists are not yet aware that the Nigerian situation and realities themselves, as well as similar situations in many countries of the world, and the laws of the international community, have pushed the Nigerian debate beyond the realm of threats to law and peace, and beyond the realms of state authoritarianism and strong-arm measures, and have charted insuppressible legitimacy for ethnic nationalist activities and demands – even demands for separation from Nigeria.

In a book which he wrote and published in 1998, the book titled *This Animal Called Man*, Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo, military Head of State in the 1970s and later, in 1999-2007, elected President of Nigeria, suggested that the right to secede, and the procedure for peaceful secession, should be clearly stated in the Nigerian constitution – in emulation, according to him, of some clauses like that in the constitution of Ethiopia.

In 1999, a leading Yoruba legal practitioner, Lawyer Adedapo Adeniran, wrote a book with the important title, *Nigeria: The Case for Peaceful and Friendly Dissolution*. His book spells out the imperatives for the separation of the various parts of Nigeria, peaceful, lawful and friendly processes towards the separation, and the incalculable benefits of separating peacefully, lawfully and in a friendly manner.

In an important speech in Lagos in 2002, the veteran Nigerian nationalist, Chief Anthony Enahoro, after reminding Nigerians of General Obasanjo's suggestion of 1998, went on to make the historic suggestion that, in order to restore order and peace to Nigeria, the right of secession should be enshrined in the Nigerian constitution, in conformity with the laws and conventions of the United Nations Organization and the African Union.

At the United Nations General Assembly in New York in 2016, President Buhari was asked about the agitations of many Igbo Nigerians for a separate Biafra country. He answered that if the agitators wanted to be taken seriously, they should establish a law-abiding organization to promote their demands peacefully, and that if they did that, the Nigerian

state would have to listen to them and talk with them. Internationally, President Buhari was understood to mean that asking for Biafra was not illegal in itself, but that as long as the agitators for Biafra continued to go on violent street demonstrations, confrontations with law-enforcement agencies, and defiance of the Nigerian state and its laws, Nigeria would have no option other than to send law-enforcement agencies to control them; but that, if they would adopt peaceful political means, then Nigeria would respond to them by discussion and negotiation. In short, President Buhari stated the laws as spelt out in the resolutions, declarations, conventions and constitutions of the United Nations Organization, the African Union, and the rest of the international community. Those laws and conventions are an open door for all ethnic nationalists today in the world; they are part of the laws of Nigeria because Nigeria is a signatory to them.

Professor Ango Abdullahi, former Vice-Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, speaking for the Northern Elders Forum in a public interview in May 2017, made the following important statements: “if Nigerians are tired of staying together, they should be prepared to accept divisions instead of remaining in agony and disappointment with one another. - - - every Nigerian should be able to speak his opinion about the state of the country - - -”. Concerning the specific agitation for Biafra by a young citizen named Nnamdi Kanu, Professor Abdullahi said, “ - - the issue of Biafra is all part of the discussion of restructuring Nigeria. - - - Yes, if Biafra means negotiations, yes. It’s all a matter of discussion. If it means Igbo want to have a country of their own separate from Nigeria, it is a matter of discussion and we are prepared for the discussion”. Then he added the following crucial point about how people should handle ethnic nationalist demands: “If it is discovered that the law of the country is violated, that somebody has gone beyond his fundamental rights, the law is very clear on this. What perhaps government is concerned about is that violence was part of Kanu’s agitation, to realize his dream by force. I think that is what government is trying to tackle to my understanding. So if Kanu is talking about Biafra, he is free to talk about Biafra and everybody is free to talk about his understanding of the Nigerian state. We are always talking that the Nigerian state is not working and how can we make it to work? And if the best option is to call for separate countries, why not?”

Alhaji Mohammed Mahadi Shehu, Chairman of Dialogue Group, Kaduna, made a strong plea in late August 2020 for the breaking up of Nigeria into many small countries and in an orderly and peaceful manner. He expressed the view that the 1914 Amalgamation was done “out of mischief without taking into consideration the peculiarities in Nigeria”, that it was a bad mistake, and that since independence in 1960, Nigeria has stumbled through one form of calamity or tragedy or other. He added, “Let us peacefully go on the (negotiation) table, break the Kola, and distribute the country for everybody’s peace. If we do not do it now, the future generations will abuse us”. He further added, “It is better for Nigeria to break into smaller, smaller, countries as much as possible - - - to save properties, lives, relationships and posterity” – because, as things stand and are developing today, no angel can ever unite Nigeria.

Furthermore, We Operate by the Provisions of International and Nigerian Law

In the background to all the above writings and statements there are the various international declarations, laws and conventions asserting self-determination as an inalienable right of every nationality in the world. These include the United Nations Charter (1945), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR], the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [ICESCR], the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007), the African Union's Convention on Human and Peoples Rights, etc. These laws and conventions assert that every indigenous nation has "the inalienable right to self determination", "the right to determine their political status" and to develop their cultures and their economic and social wellbeing in their own way and under government of their own choosing. These laws also assert the duty of every state or country not only to recognize but also to protect these rights. They lay it down that a nationality seeking to assert its self-determination does not need to seek permission from anybody, may not be imposed upon by the country to which it currently belongs, may not have its citizens denied their civic rights, and may not have its territory occupied militarily without its express consent. These laws and conventions also say that seeking self-determination does not entitle any people to foment violence or insurrection in any country. All these declarations, laws and conventions, we repeat, are part of the laws of Nigeria because Nigeria is a signatory to them all.

Thus, the paths to peaceful ethnic nationalist activities, and to peaceful demands for separation from any country, including Nigeria, are lawful and legally open. It is an idea whose time has come in the world, but, unfortunately, many Nigerian ethnic nationalist activists are still not aware of this and still prefer violent street riots, confrontations with law-enforcement agencies, and incendiary and terroristic threats. Instead of all these, the peaceful road is open and available.

And we also take serious note of the Wisdom of most former Rulers of Nigeria

Very importantly, most of the foremost Nigerian leaders who have served in the highest and most important positions in the affairs of Nigeria have offered a particular piece of wisdom about the realities of Nigeria. The said wisdom, in summary, is that the Nigerian unity which some of us like to claim does not exist – and even can never exist. Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, a simple old teacher who served as the first Prime Minister of the Nigerian Federation from 1951 to 1966, made the statement repeatedly that Nigerian unity does not exist and that there is no basis for it. In one of his most reported public statements on the subject, he said as follows: "Since 1914, the British Government has been trying to make Nigeria into one country, but the Nigerian peoples themselves are historically different in their backgrounds, in their religious beliefs and customs, and do not show themselves any willingness to unite. Nigerian unity is only a British intention for the country". The topmost leader of the Northern Region between 1949 and 1966, Sir Ahmadu Bello, described the 1914 Amalgamation as "the mistake of 1914". In a contribution to a debate in the Nigerian parliament in 1953 he said, "The mistake of 1914 has come to light, and I should like it to go no further". In one of the Nigerian constitutional meetings in London in the late 1950s, when Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Premier of the Eastern Region, advised, "Let us forget our differences", Sir Ahmadu Bello responded, "No, we cannot forget our differences. We must respect our differences". Sir Ahmadu Bello, fearful of domination by the more educated peoples of the

South in those years, was vehemently bent on a very large measure of regional autonomy. But after the British had maneuvered to make his Fulani group the dominant group in the Nigerian Federal Government at independence in 1960, he felt that he had found a Fulani solution to Nigeria's intrinsic lack of unity – he thought that the solution was to impose a rigid and perpetual Fulani dictatorship over Nigeria. So, on October 12 1960, eleven days after the celebration of Independence, he was reported by a local newspaper, *The Parrot*, to have said, “The new nation called Nigeria should be an extension of the estate of our great-grandfather Othman dan Fodio. We must ruthlessly prevent a change of power. We must use the minorities of the North as willing tools, and the South as conquered territory, and never let them rule over us, and never allow them to control their own future”. He was saying, in essence, that it was impossible for Nigerian peoples, on their own, to unite, but that the Fulani, having been vested with federal power by the British at independence, should pursue a ruthless agenda of suppression of the non-Fulani peoples in order to keep Nigeria united as one country. But the truth is that, in spite of Fulani ruthlessness, impunity and terrorism, Nigeria's unity does not exist and cannot exist. In fact, the terroristic rampages of the Fulani today are making it abundantly clear that to keep Nigeria together as one country is to keep prolonging in the Nigerian space the scenario of escalating violence and insecurity, terrorism and ethnic cleansing, poverty and deprivation, retrogression of civilization, and abysmal human suffering.

General Yakubu Gowon, as Military Head of State following the military coup of July 1966, made the following very deep statement: “Suffice it to say, putting all considerations to test – political, economic, as well as social – the basis for (Nigerian) unity is not there - - -“. General Olusegun Obasanjo was Military Head of State in 1975 to 1979. As would be remembered, in 1998, as the processes of extreme centralization, dictatorship and state terror pushed Nigeria towards disintegration, Obasanjo offered the proposal that the Nigerian constitution should include a clause allowing any people of Nigeria to secede, and providing for peaceful steps to the secession.

The Fulani President of Nigeria since 2015, Muhammadu Buhari, is fond of saying that “Nigeria's unity is not negotiable”. What he manifestly means is that the Fulani kind of unity that was proposed or predicted by Sir Ahmadu Bello eleven days after independence (unity imposed by the Fulani through the use of Nigeria's federal power, resulting in Fulani subjugation of the other peoples of Nigeria) has been more or less achieved and that the outcome is not negotiable. However, former President Obasanjo has responded to Buhari that what is happening is not unity of Nigeria but “Fulanisation” of Nigeria, and that civil war or the violent breaking up of Nigeria “is imminent”.

And we take serious note of the increasingly Dark Assessments of Nigeria by the International Community

In the international community, Nigeria is currently widely assessed to be in its worst condition ever – in terms of its governance, its economy, its security, the moods of its many peoples, and its chances of continuing to exist as one country. A 2011 case study of Nigeria for United States policy makers concluded that even if Nigeria were to put forth its best

efforts, “Nigeria has a long-term struggle ahead to remain a viable state”. A United Nations Common Country Analysis (CCA) on Nigeria paints a very gloomy picture. It describes Nigeria as “a divided society on the basis of the plurality of ethnic, religious, and regional identities that have tended to define the country’s political existence”. It added that, for decades, different peoples in Nigeria had at different times expressed feelings of being marginalized, of being short-changed, dominated, oppressed, threatened, or even targeted for extermination; that most of Nigeria’s development indices and social indices were performing at much below acceptable levels; and that Nigeria was suffering serious constraints of slow economic growth, slow social development, and lack of good governance. It summed up that Nigeria was “one of the poorest and most unequal countries in the world, with 80 million or 64% of her population living below poverty line”. In early 2018, an international agency that monitors extreme poverty trends in the world classified Nigeria as the number one home of “extreme poverty” in the world. At the same time, various informed observers were warning that if Nigeria continued in its current mode and continued to decline at its current pace, nearly 50% of the world’s poorest people by 2050 would be Nigerians. In December 2020, the World Bank projected that the number of Nigerians living in poverty would soon top 100 million. By early 2019, a major economic and business research body published the frightening information that Nigeria was already expending 69% of its Gross National Product to service debts and predicted that that percentage would reach 83% by 2023. Even so, Nigeria’s government continues to seek and take more and more loans around the world – because it must borrow to keep its basic functions running. A United Nations Rapporteur who visited officially in 2019 reported that the 1999 Nigerian constitution was “a pressure cooker” for injustice, division, conflicts and insecurity. Nigerians constantly flood the International Criminal Court (ICC) with petitions, complaints and allegations of serious human rights abuses and crimes against humanity. In 2020, the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced that there were sound bases for investigations of crimes against humanity in the situation in the Nigeria – human rights abuses, war crimes, extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances of people, conscription of under-age children into unofficial military service – investigations that could result in serious criminal charges against many highly placed Nigerian public officials. Amnesty International applauded this announcement and added that the killings of tens of youths during the peaceful protests against SARS in Lagos be also investigated by the ICC. In mid-2020, the United States blacklisted Nigeria as a country of serious concern for violations of religious freedom, and in the last months of the year, the United States Senate held public hearings over the troubling reports of attacks on religious freedom and widespread killings and terrorism in Nigeria. Even in the United Kingdom (the country that created and has always supported the Fulani rulers of Nigeria), the terrible reports of violence and insecurity in Nigeria at last moved the British Parliament to hold debates and express serious concerns and condemnations about the Nigerian situation. Worldwide, many are expressing doubts whether a country that has dragged itself as far down as Nigeria has done can ever pick itself back up again to continue as one country.

Finally, we take note that Many Other Nigerian Peoples Are Now Seeking to Quit Nigeria too

Countless significant voices from the South and Middle Belt of Nigeria are now saying that they want their various peoples to separate from Nigeria. The Igbo people of the Nigerian Southeast have historically been the first in this – with their decades-old demand for their separate country of Biafra. Leading citizens of the Nigerian South-south are now demanding a Niger Delta Federation of their own. We Yoruba people of the Nigerian Southwest are demanding our own Yoruba Republic or simply Yorubaland. And the many important voices from the Middle Belt are demanding a Takuruku Federation for the peoples of the Middle Belt. Thus, altogether, peoples who constitute fully 75% of the population of Nigeria are demanding separation from Nigeria. Many well informed Nigerians are boldly speaking up to say that the dissolution of Nigeria is needed, or inevitable – and imminent.

THEREFORE, WE YORUBA CHOOSE THE PEACEFUL AND LAW-ABIDING PATH TO ASSERT OUR SELF-DETERMINATION AND SOVEREIGN STATUS OUT OF NIGERIA

We Yoruba lead in the choice of the peaceful and law-abiding path to our goal of a separate country of our own. And we the servants of the Yoruba nation in this struggle faithfully operate, and will always faithfully operate, with methods of peaceful organization, peaceful demands, peaceful propaganda, peaceful protests, peaceful legal actions, peaceful political persuasion, and peaceful negotiation. We will push for negotiating tables, and never push for street brawls or any other kind of conflicts. And if we find, among our people, any nationalist activist person or group that is inclined towards violence, we will encourage them to turn instead to peaceful and law-abiding means.

After careful studies of the records of separatist movements in our world, we are persuaded that the peaceful approach is more likely to succeed. Various nationalist agitations in various countries of the world have, in the course of the past century, employed violent means at various times while striving to achieve their nationalist goals. Yoruba groups engaged in serving the Yoruba nation need to note carefully that none of these uses of violent or terroristic methods achieved their purpose of self-determination or autonomy for their nations; all they succeeded in doing was to generate confrontations and wars with the governments of their countries.

Young nationalist agitators, being young, are naturally attracted to tough and rough activism. From only proudly proclaiming the virtues of their own nations, youthful nationalist activists commonly tend to lapse into insulting other nations, into needless bragging and boasting, into daring or challenging other nations, or even into daring and challenging their country and its government – all of which actions tend to provoke avoidable conflicts, hostile governmental actions, and even wars. Our Yoruba youths must learn the truth that the use of rough and violent means does not usually confer success – and, indeed, that it is usually more likely to prevent success.

Emulating the kind of peaceful processes employed by nationalist movements that have achieved various grades of success in our times –the Scots, Welsh, French Canadians, Czechs, Slovaks, Timor Leste and others – our various Yoruba self-determination groups and organizations must operate peacefully. Altogether, we Yoruba must demonstrate our Yoruba nation’s civilization and maturity, while resolutely and irrepressibly pushing our way

forward to the great goal of Yoruba strength, self-determination, self-fulfillment and prosperity.

Moreover, we Yoruba nation will be concerned, not only about our own nation's well-being and future, but also about the well-being and future of the other peoples with whom we have been co-citizens in the same country of Nigeria for over a century. We will always bear in mind that these non-Yoruba peoples will be the neighbors of our Yoruba nation in all the future; and we shall therefore seriously seek to ensure that these neighbors will be friendly, and not hostile, neighbors – neighbors whom we can help and who can help us.

Furthermore, we repeat that in faithfulness to our ancient tradition of hospitality to foreigners and strangers in our land, we sincerely assure all non-Yoruba persons who have been living or doing business peacefully in our homeland, that, in our sovereign country, they will be able to continue to do so peacefully and productively under our country's laws, and that others who choose to come will equally enjoy the benefits of our laws. Indeed, we know that there will be a rush of investments and investors to our country, largely from our Yoruba Diaspora from all over the world, and partly from other sources, and we expect that investors from our immediate neighbors will be many among these.

We Yoruba acknowledge that, in our trying to walk our chosen peaceful path, we have a problem arising from the fact that Fulani and other terrorists are ravaging our homeland, creating terror camps in our forests, killing thousands of our people, forcing many of our farmers to abandon farming altogether, raping our women, kidnapping our people and extorting ransom from our families. We are therefore compelled to defend our homeland. At first, our State Governments created a local defence agency named Amotekun to deal with this crisis in an officially managed manner, but federal resistance to it has robbed it of effectiveness. Consequently, small volunteer local teams of our youths have arisen to the task, and that has tended to create the impression that our self-determination struggle is employing some violence – since the self-determination struggle belongs predominantly among our youths. However, efforts by our self-determination movement to assert a difference between the self-determination struggle *per se* and the local self-defence initiatives are going on all the time and are sincere, as people of good will can easily see and testify to.

If some of us choose to hold a public protest or rally in our homeland in Nigeria, they must do it in a peaceful and law-abiding manner. We must never treat police personnel as enemies; they are not our enemies. This is the manifest wish of our Yoruba nation. The right of peaceful protests and rallies is everybody's right under international laws and under the laws of all countries. It is good to hold rallies to spread the message. But we must never allow our rallies to result in rowdiness, conflicts, confrontations with the police, obstructions to our sophisticated struggle, or distractions from our central message. Our Yoruba nation is powerful; it commands the intellectual, cultural, diplomatic, professional, technological and other capabilities to achieve its purposes without violence and without any messy confrontations with Nigeria's law enforcement authorities.

As for the Yoruba in the Diaspora, they must frequently hold big rallies to bring the unbearable conditions in which Yoruba people live in Nigeria to the attention of the wide world, and to seek support for the quest of the Yoruba nation for a separate country of its own.

Thank God for giving us the social media at this time. It helps to spread the Yoruba message very widely and powerfully. But let us henceforth sanitize our social media communications. We must desist from insulting or threatening anybody and from speaking terroristic or incendiary language. We must desist from denigrating or threatening any of our own people. We must desist from threatening the government of Nigeria. Our self-determination message is so big, so compelling and so noble that there is no room in it for insults or threats, or for incendiary and terroristic statements. What we need is to spell out the message – the message – constantly, unrelentingly, until the whole world becomes saturated with it. Who are we Yoruba? To what heights did we rise in history before we were dragooned into Nigeria? How have we been brutalized by our being part of Nigeria? How are we now facing total destruction in Nigeria? How are we peacefully, lawfully and decently fighting for our exit from Nigeria. What our Oodua country will be soon – a land of order, opportunity, enterprise, sanity, prosperity and greatness, a strong factor for peace and harmony in the world, etc, etc, etc. These are our messages; let us publicize them might and mane, day and night. That is the way to enhance our chances of success.

Finally, all Yoruba persons working for the Yoruba nation must always dutifully bear in mind that they are beginning the journey of reviving and rebuilding their Yoruba Nation and presenting it to the world for what it really is – a nation and people blessed with orderly group life, and dedicated to respect for human life, for human freedom and human dignity, and powerfully motivated to build and advance civilization.

We Need Lots of Courage

Operating with these principles and this high sense of duty, we Yoruba must exhibit the highest level of courage and bravery in making known and pursuing our quest – the quest for Yoruba revival, retrieval, self-determination, autonomy and prosperity. Yoruba organizations, groups and individuals who accept and support this quest have the duty to raise their voices and speak up fearlessly.

Obviously, while every Yoruba civic organization would pursue its other agenda, all organizations and persons who subscribe to the idea of self determination for the Yoruba nation should find ways to collaborate, meet periodically together, and decide together how to strengthen the delivery of the Yoruba self-determination message, and how to take the struggle to final victory. Ilana Omo Oodua, which is already an umbrella organization for over 200 of affiliated civic organizations at home and in the Diaspora, obviously has a major duty to encourage and promote the cooperation and collaboration of all the organizations seeking self-determination for the Yoruba nation.

Our Yoruba cause is a just and noble cause. We ask our Yoruba people to have the courage to embrace its peaceful approach.

We need to hurry to attain self-determination. We must not wait until the masses of our people, especially our youths, become so desperate as to break into violence.

And We Need The Most Imaginative Diplomacy in Nigeria

In Nigeria, we must be respectfully aware of the growing desires for self-determination among various nations. We must establish relations with similar peaceful self-determination organizations of other Nigerian nationalities, especially with nationalities with experiences and desires that are similar to ours, in the hope that having many nationalities working together in the same peaceful spirit will promote the peaceful and law-abiding approach that we have chosen, and will enhance our chances of ultimate peaceful victory. The awful and worsening Nigerian conditions are breeding and strengthening the spirit of self-determination in more and more nations – especially in the South and Middle Belt of Nigeria. Our struggle for sovereignty for our Yoruba nation must find respectful ways to seek added strength through collaboration or alliances with these other nations' struggles.

It is important to report here that we Yoruba have achieved some significant steps in fostering close relations with the nations of the Nigerian South and Middle Belt. In 2016-17, our nation's oldest organization, Afenifere, and the Igbo top leadership in Ohanaeze Ndigbo, embarked upon a close relationship – and ultimately put together a very important ceremony, 'Handshake Across the Niger', aimed at ending decades-old animosities which Nigeria had bred between the Yoruba and Igbo nations. That success immediately generated widespread interest among the peoples of the South-south and the Middle Belt, and soon produced a very prestigious inter-regional organization known as the 'Southern and Middle Belt Leaders Forum' - a body of elder statesmen that has continued to be very virile and respectable in Nigerian affairs. Then in the course of 2020, some mostly younger self-determination activists (with Ilana Omo Oodua acting on the Yoruba side), created a proactive organization known as the 'Nigerian Indigenous Nations Alliance for Self-determination' (NINAS). On behalf of the indigenous peoples of the South and Middle Belt, all of whom are reeling under the Fulani marauding and terrorism, NINAS has proclaimed a constitutional dispute with the Nigerian state, with a constitutional *force majeure*, which rejects the 1999 Nigerian constitution as a fraud, and offers the Nigeria state a 90-day period to take steps to negotiate with the injured nations an acceptable path forward for Nigeria. This thoughtful and responsible legal instrument has been filed with the United Nations, with the Nigerian Federal Government, and with the governments of the United States, United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Russia, China and Japan. This step, taken in mid-December 2020, has put a powerful note of urgency on the resolution of the disastrous Nigerian situation and is a remarkable step in the promotion of peaceful advance towards definitive change.

We also need the most imaginative Diplomacy in the Wide World

We also need to devise countless ways to reach, inform and persuade the wider world. For this purpose, it is crucially important that the Yoruba Diaspora in each country should guide our efforts in their country of residence. In each country, the questions are: whom should we

reach for the best effect; how do we reach them; are there any Yoruba persons who are close to these important persons and institutions or who have special access to them; are there any important persons or groups who exhibit some sympathy for the Yoruba nation or for nations struggling for liberation?

Moreover, how do we work for sympathy for our cause in such important bodies as the United Nations, European Union and African Union, and such important countries as the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, China, Israel, France, Germany, Japan? How do we move the civilized world to action in the face of relentless efforts to destroy democracy, religious freedom and ethnic and cultural diversity in Nigeria, in the face of vicious ethnic cleansing and even attempts at genocide, in the face of concentration of terrorism that threatens to expand from Nigeria to engulf all of West Africa – all of which are being supported and aided by the federal government of Nigeria?

We have obtained for our Yoruba nation the membership of the UNPO. We have thereby taken a very significant step forward – a step that opens for our Yoruba nation very important support and help in our quest for self-determination. We must now go on and use the support available through UNPO to pursue the further steps to our nation's ultimate success and victory.

In the special case of the United Kingdom, we need to design very special ways and means. It is true that official Britain was generally apathetic to our Yoruba nation in colonial Nigeria – and that it still tends to support Fulani control of Nigeria. The original reason was that British colonial officials feared that the Yoruba, being much more educated from the beginning than other Nigerian and African nationalities, could wield influence that could hurt British colonial and post-colonial interests in Nigeria. But in our present struggle, we must exploit other, and positive, realities and possibilities. For instance, in Britain and Canada, plus even in the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria, there are as many as eight millions of Yoruba people who were born as British citizens or who have otherwise acquired British citizenship – Yoruba people who travel in the world on British passports. That makes Britain very close to the Yoruba nation in the world. How do we take advantage of the special position of these millions and this closeness? What are the possibilities for both sides, and the advantages for the UK, of a Yoruba nation-state that is naturally close to the UK and that grows prosperous and powerful in the world? How do we take advantage of the sympathies of some British churchmen, intellectuals and politicians who admire the character and qualities of our Yoruba nation? Our Yoruba people who are resident in Britain and Canada, especially those who are citizens in these countries, have a big task of maturely guiding and leading us in these matters.

Important note: As we go seeking help in the wide world for our self-determination struggle, we Yoruba must never make the mistake of letting our nation appear as a weak nation begging on its knees. We are a strong nation – and that is the image we must resolutely put forth. We were a strong nation long before British colonialism. We abundantly demonstrated our strength as a strong nation in the decade before Nigerian independence when, as a semi-independent nation under the British, we grew our Western Region of Nigeria to become the best governed, most democratic,

most progressive, most educated, most modernizing, most socio-economically developed, most industrialized, with the best civil service, the best political leadership, and the best agricultural and export economy, in the then colonial Africa. And, since Nigeria's independence, in spite of the inevitable impact on us of the perpetual decline and retrogression of Nigeria, the mostly incompetent and ignorant governance, the crookedness, impunity and corruption, and the constant ethnic and religious conflicts among many of Nigerian ethnic nationalities, we Yoruba remain far above the religious and inter-ethnic conflicts, and we remain the leaders of the Nigerian economy. Though we are only 25% of Nigeria's population, we command 85% of Nigeria's industrial capacity and production, over 65% of Nigeria's professional class, over 60% of Nigeria's commerce, etc. Whichever nation helps our self-determination struggle today will soon benefit seriously from relations with our sovereign country. We do not beg on our knees for help; we seek future partners in progress and prosperity.

And We Need to Respect and Persuade All Shades of Opinion in Our Own Nation

Because we are Yoruba, and because our Yoruba culture respects differences of opinion, we must respect even those Yoruba who think that, regardless of how harsh the conditions of Nigeria may be now or may become later, our Yoruba nation should continue to be part of Nigeria. We speak for all Yoruba people at home and abroad who support Yoruba self-determination, freedom, good governance, security and prosperity in a sovereign country of our own. But we must speak to all Yoruba people and listen to them – in a respectful and brotherly manner.

In short, we respectfully urge that the debate among us Yoruba people be conducted with a sense of responsibility and with mutual brotherly respect. Among us, it is now time to forgive offences and animosities that may linger from the past. It is a time to dare to take hold of brotherliness, courage and hope. Let each person or group enjoy freedom and safety to voice their opinions in this debate. And let us courageously and persistently persuade our people. Ultimately, we will find some way to conclude the debate with some mechanism, to ascertain the majority opinion on this historic matter – perhaps through a referendum or a scientifically conducted opinion poll (the kind of noiseless and highly respectable opinion poll that the Scotts have been doing in Scotland).

We need to remember with all respect that until about the end of 2019, all of us active Yoruba patriots were demanding a restructuring of Nigeria so as to return Nigeria to a true federal structure. Most of us have now given up on restructuring and moved on to the demand for Yoruba self-determination – or separate country of Yorubaland out of Nigeria. Our reasons are clear. First, it would be foolish for us to take the Fulani depredations and threats lightly. They are threatening that they could drag all of Nigeria through decades or even centuries of the present disruptive terrorism. Even if we manage to get Nigeria restructured, they will still be citizens of the Nigeria to which we will belong – and they will have constitutional rights to bring their terrorism to our homeland. We simply cannot afford that any longer. Secondly, it is now clear to us that, terrorism or no terrorism, the Fulani are obviously a pre-modern people whose general psychology is mostly anti-modern, and who are intent on

pulling all the other peoples of Nigeria to the Fulani level. In sharp contrast, we Yoruba are the foremost civilization-building nation in Black Africa. Being part of Nigeria has pulled us back, and we need to free ourselves and return to the path of progress and modernization. We need to do this not just for ourselves and our children; we need to do it for the whole of the Black Race. Understandably, some of the captains of our Yoruba nation are still harping on restructuring. We must not denigrate or alienate them; we must respect them and continue to do our best to show them the obviously right path forward today. That is the reasonable approach.

Very importantly too, we who work for Yoruba self-determination must carefully consider our attitude and approaches to our Yoruba men and women who are engaged in Nigerian politics and governance. Naturally, we expect every Yoruba person to support our nation's self defence against terrorism and our nation's struggle for self-determination. But even if our politicians choose not to raise a finger to help, we still must devise rational ways to approach them. We must not forget certain realities. One is that, as long as our Yoruba nation remains part of Nigeria, we must have some Yoruba men and women in the politics and governance of Nigeria. Therefore, our brethren who are aspiring to achieve elevation through Nigerian politics are not doing anything wrong or reprehensible. It is we who must let it become clearer and clearer to them that a 2023 Nigerian election will never happen in our Yorubaland – that our Yorubaland will be a separate country before then. If we handle the situation rationally and competently, some of these men and women might turn around to find ways to help the Yoruba struggle – particularly, might find ways to use their power and influence to help protect our Yoruba people and even to help our Yoruba self-determination struggle. But even if some never change at all, we must never forget that they are still our people – and we must never lose hope that they can change someday. Moreover, as we know very well, though some of our youths remain supporters of our politicians, yet nearly all such youths also fully support the massive demand of Yoruba youths for a separate Yoruba country of their own. Therefore, we must manage this important reality carefully. In short, we need to be thoughtful and careful in our approaches to our politicians. Success of our self-determination struggle, and stability and prosperity in our coming sovereign country, demand it.

In summary, we must learn to use our enormous support by the masses of our people in our approach to our politicians, so as to be able to exert effective pressure on them. The great 19th century Austrian statesman, Prince Metternich, said that a statesman's goal must be as fixed as a star, but that his path to the star may have to be as winding as the path of a comet. We who lead the struggle for Yoruba self-determination must strive to be statesmen. We must always be keenly aware of emerging possibilities and opportunities for advancing the struggle, and we must be intelligently ready to take advantage of them.

There is also a particularly important consideration concerning our State Governors. It is that we in the self-determination struggle must demonstrate serious understanding of the condition and limitations in which our State Governors are operating in today's Nigeria. From the nature of things, we are not likely to get any of our State Governors to give open support to our agitation for Yoruba self-determination; but we must never be hostile to them. On the contrary, we must adroitly explore all possibilities in our contacts with them.

Moreover, just now, as these words are being written, we have a serious problem that we must address with urgency and caring. Most of our educated youths are very intensely angry with, and incensed against, most of our leading politicians – our elected and appointed public office holders, and our former elected and appointed public office holders, and even the generality of our Yoruba elite. The youths feel neglected, abandoned, even despised by those who have acquired various kinds of success in life through benefiting from the assets of modern Yoruba society – from free education, from higher education scholarships, from professional and entrepreneurial success, from political support by the Yoruba people, etc. It is very dangerous to continue to ignore these mounting youth feelings of anger. According to some official estimates, young people between the ages of 18 and 50 constitute over 74% of Yoruba population in Nigeria – an enormous power that, if unleashed in anger, can devastate our whole society. Some foretaste of the power of the smoldering and vengeful anger among our youths showed up briefly recently in the destructive outbursts that followed the soldiers' shooting of the 'endSARS' peaceful protesters in Lagos. Unknown to most Yoruba leaders, many informed people have been warning for years that a massive and terribly destructive youth revolt could happen in Yorubaland in Nigeria. We who are striving for Yoruba self-determination now have the duty of taking very incisive and careful steps to preempt such a disaster. The fact that the Yoruba self-determination struggle is making great progress is reviving hope among our youths. But we need to evolve much closer contacts with our nation's most successful professionals, business captains and leading public officials, in order to expose them to the frank truths of our nation's conditions today, and, in order to make the best counsels available to them. And more importantly, we need to be particularly and carefully respectful of the angry masses of our youths; and we need to engage in efforts to improve their opportunities right now. Happily, some of our self-determination organizations (for instance Ilana Omo Oodua) have started to engage in serious youth development and empowerment training programs, and we must encourage more and more of our self-determination organizations to do the same.

But very problematic are some Yoruba intellectuals and professionals who have various kinds of personal reasons and incentives for defending Nigeria, and who tend to manipulate and doctor facts for that purpose. Some members of the Yoruba elite and intelligentsia, while never speaking up against the Fulani killings, brutalities, throat-cuttings, rapes, kidnappings, and destruction of Yoruba farms and other means of livelihood, and while never speaking against the obvious Fulani attempts to seize the Yoruba homeland and subdue the Yoruba owners of the land, hardly ever miss a chance to claim that Yoruba persons trying to resist the Fulani outrages are engaging in ethnic profiling against the Fulani, and abusing the human rights of the Fulani. In fact, at some point in recent times, some of these Yoruba intellectuals and professionals claimed that it was Yoruba youths and not Fulani marauders that were committing the kidnappings in Yorubaland – simply because a couple of the persons arrested for kidnapping in an area of Yorubaland were found to be Yoruba. In making their claim, these members of the Yoruba elite conveniently feigned ignorance of a universal fact of human history – the fact that when a country is experiencing an invasion, home-born criminal elements in that country tend step up their criminalities under the cover of the invasion. Some among our elite leaders chose to play down the massive spate of kidnapping being perpetrated by Fulani terrorists all over Yorubaland, and chose to

exaggerate the acts of kidnapping that were traceable to some homegrown Yoruba criminals. In fact, from among these pro-Nigeria Yoruba intellectuals and professionals, some have been sending messages to the international community to say that Yoruba claims of killings, destruction, raping and kidnapping in Yorubaland in Nigeria are mere fabrications that should not be believed, that Yoruba people are comfortable in Nigeria, and that the high level of Yoruba influence in Nigeria is proved by the fact that a Yoruba man is Vice-President of Nigeria.

Though these postures by some Yoruba intellectuals and professionals can be infuriating, yet we who are committed to peaceful processes towards Yoruba self-determination must resolve to handle the situation rationally and carefully. In any case, the pro-Nigeria gurus are very few and growing fewer, while the large majority of Yoruba people who desire self-determination for their Yoruba nation are steadily getting larger and larger in number – at home and in the Diaspora. Concerning the efforts of the pro-Nigeria elements to misinform the international community, they have no chance of succeeding – because the information about the Yoruba experiences in Nigeria are so massive and are being made constantly available to influential persons and agencies in the international community.

Also very importantly, we must uphold, and even seriously elevate, our respect for our **traditional rulers. Our Obas** represent the peak of our traditional political civilization; they are the direct descendants of the great kings who have ruled and guided our Yoruba nation for over a thousand years. As we pursue our self-determination struggle with peace and diplomacy, our Obas are naturally our most dignified ambassadors. We must suppress the current tendency whereby some of our youths feel free to denounce and castigate our Obas in the social media. Even if any of our Obas happens to stumble into saying or doing something that we consider to be injurious to our self-determination struggle or our resistance to the Fulani threats, we must be respectful as we discuss with such an Oba. We must also respectfully find ways to make our Obas cease ventilating their disagreements and rivalries in public. At all costs, we must prevent our Obas from being broken into hostile camps. We must let our Obas enjoy a new surge of honour among us, and we must let them be assured that, in our own sovereign country, a much higher status, and much higher dignity, await our Obas. We must show gratitude as more and more of our Obas are standing up to support the defence of our homeland against Fulani rampages – and as some of them dare to speak up for our nation's self-determination. In short, we must recognize that we need significant inputs from our Obas if we are to succeed in our quest for our nation's self-determination.

Again very importantly, we must diligently make efforts to take our quest and explain our actions to, and respectfully seek the support of, the spiritual leaders of our nation – all categories of our spiritual leaders of all religions – Muslim, Christian and our indigenous religion (or Isese). This is crucial for the success of our struggle.

We must be careful at all times and in all things to ensure that our self-determination struggle is a possession of all of us Yoruba people of all religious persuasions. We must not allow any doubt or argument about this important matter to creep into our affairs. We Yoruba nation

have the reputation of being the best managers of religious diversity in the world, and we must now show it seamlessly and even beautifully in our self-determination struggle.

Also, finally, we must demonstrate in all things that the Yoruba family in Nigeria does not end with the Yoruba of the Nigerian Southwest but includes our Yoruba people in Kwara and Kogi States and our Itsekiri Yoruba people in Delta State.

Our Many Self-determination Organizations Must Now Collaborate

In the initial phases of our Yoruba self-determination struggle, we Yoruba people, especially our Yoruba youths, rushed to create very many organizations dedicated to the goal of Yoruba self-determination. Every group that did this did it because of their passionate love for our Yoruba nation.

Not unnaturally, but unfortunately, the existence of these hundreds of organizations resulted in sometimes unwholesome rivalries, and created the impression that we Yoruba are disunited and incapable of organizing ourselves properly for a struggle that we all strongly believe in. In short, the existence of these organizations, rather than demonstrating our nation's strength, has tended to appear like indications of our nation's weakness.

In spite of this near chaos, we have succeeded in various directions in the struggle. But we obviously cannot and should not continue in the near chaos. From our knowledge of our culture, we know that trying to dissolve all our hundreds of organizations in order to fuse them into only one organization cannot work. The wiser approach is to sustain every one of our organizations and then work out a structure of collaboration and strength among them. We must impart strength and confidence to each of our organizations and thereby strengthen our whole self-determination struggle. We must stop letting the world get the impression that the existence of so many organizations is a sign of our nation's weakness; we must convert it to our nation's strength.

The first step has to be that we consciously kill the spirit of hostile rivalry among our organizations and replace it with the spirit of brotherliness and brotherly support and encouragement. We must constantly remind ourselves that while each organization may be pursuing its agenda and the self-determination struggle in its own way, all are striving for the same goal – the goal of Yoruba self-determination, freedom and prosperity.

It is therefore of uttermost importance that any of us who has developed or acquired the habit of denigrating the contributions of any organization or persons in this struggle, and those who have been engaging in undercutting any organization or person, now honorably give up those unfortunate habits – because such habits hurt the Yoruba struggle and ultimately the unity and strength of the Yoruba nation.

Therefore, to collaborate over the self-determination struggle. we must establish meetings that bring the leaders of the organizations together periodically, for the purpose of helping one another as organizations in the struggle, and for generally comparing notes and tackling problems together.

The day of united, purposeful and disciplined striving together to liberate our nation is now here. Interestingly, we have been hearing from some defeated terrorists in our land that their nation's 'marabout' rituals and 'spiritual power' have been responsible for making our many Yoruba organizations enemies to one another, and that the said rituals are still being intensified in order to intensify divisions and baseless hostilities among us Yoruba – to generate war by our youths against their elders, war among our important citizens, among our Obas, among our political activists, among our different religious groups, etc. While we may laugh at these threats, we must now, as individuals and organizations, so conduct ourselves as to show the enemies of our nation that their rituals and so-called 'spiritual' weapons are futile against us.

Finally, we must immediately respond to a dangerous situation that is arising for us Yoruba people in the international community. The situation is that in the offices of many international agencies and departments of some foreign governments, officials are beginning to complain that too many Yoruba organizations are submitting memoranda and petitions seeking support for the Yoruba self-determination cause, each organization claiming to be the Yoruba nation's authoritative voice or 'umbrella organization'. While there exists considerable sympathy for the Yoruba cause in many parts of the world, we Yoruba may be hurting our cause by not speaking forth with one voice to the international community. One official of a foreign government recently said the following to his former professor who is a Yoruba man, "Sir, there is much sympathy for your Yoruba nation's cause everywhere. Congratulations. But you have a problem. Far too many voices are coming around claiming that they are the accredited spokespersons for your nation. Do your people think that attending to the many Yoruba leaders is the only thing we deal with in our offices? If your people continue to behave like this, you might end up creating the impression that you Yoruba people are not serious and do not deserve any serious attention". We need to change this situation urgently.

For the needed effective collaboration and united voice, the following proposals are offered:

- i. Because the Yoruba self-determination struggle is now obviously in its final chapter, we must set up the needed structures for the collaboration of our self-determination organizations across the world before the end of April 2021.
- ii. Every one of our self-determination organizations (whether single organization or umbrella organization to many organizations) shall continue to exist as it likes and to pursue its agenda and programs in its own way.

- iii. **As a deliberate weapon for strengthening the Yoruba self-determination struggle, every Yoruba self-determination organization shall consciously take a decision in its meetings to view every other Yoruba self-determination organization as a co-warrior in the Yoruba self-determination struggle, to eschew any sort of enmity or hostility or negative rivalry towards any other Yoruba self-determination organization, and to be positive and helpful towards every other Yoruba self-determination organization.**
- iv. **We should now give the totality of the Yoruba self-determination struggle the name 'Yoruba Self-determination Movement' (YSM) - a movement to which our many organizations are contributing.**
- v. **As a matter of urgent national policy, in order to ensure due respectability and effect for the Yoruba self-determination cause in the world, all communications and delegations of the Yoruba Self-determination Movement with all international agencies and foreign governments shall be conducted by one Yoruba united voice.**
- vi. **In each country, the presidents and secretaries of all the self-determination organizations shall constitute the leadership organ of the Yoruba Self-determination Movement in that country. This organ shall be known as the Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Council (YSLC) of its country (thus: Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Council Nigeria, Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Council Spain, etc).**
- vii. **The Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Council of each country shall meet periodically (quarterly or monthly or weekly as it chooses), for the purpose of sharing information, reviewing progress, assessing and addressing problems, updating strategy and logistics, and harmonizing measures and tactics for the self-determination struggle.**
- viii. **The members of all Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Councils of all countries of the world shall constitute the 'Yoruba Self-determination Supreme Council' (YSSC) - which shall be the supreme organ of the Yoruba Self-determination Movement and shall conduct the supreme business of the Yoruba Self-determination Movement.**
- ix. **The Yoruba Self-determination Supreme Council shall meet by zoom as often as found necessary (and may hold or authorize secret meetings as necessary) for the advancement of the Yoruba self-determination struggle - to consider, decide upon and take necessary actions on all worldwide needs of the Yoruba self-determination struggle: such as establishing a 'Yoruba Self-preservation Fund' (for giving relief to Yoruba victims of terrorism and for giving assistance to the Yoruba fighters against terrorism); establishing a 'Yoruba National Trust Fund' as an everlasting backbone of the Yoruba nation (similar to the Jewish National Fund in the modern history of the state of Israel); appointment of envoys for diplomatic missions in the international community; appointment of leaders and experts to make the Yoruba self-determination case before the United Nations, the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the European Union, the African Union, and important governments of the world; appointment of**

- needed Lobbyists to promote the Yoruba self-determination case before governments and international agencies; creating an intelligence agency for the whole struggle; setting up a 'Yorubaland Government in Exile' when the time for it shall be deemed ripe, etc. (Note: some members of the Yoruba Diaspora worldwide are already taking welcome steps to bring all Yoruba self-determination organizations in the Diaspora together to create a DIRECTORATE. If these steps succeed, they will make the work of creating a Government in Exile faster for the YSSC).
- x. The Yoruba Self-determination Supreme Council shall appoint as its coordinating committee the Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Council of the Yoruba Homeland in Nigeria (to convene its meetings, keep its minutes and records, circulate its information, etc).
 - xi. The Yoruba Self-determination Leadership Council of the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria shall establish a Secretariat in the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria. Apart from providing the place for the business of the Yoruba Leadership Council Nigeria and the business of the YSSC, this secretariat shall provide space for the meetings of any self-determination organizations that may need it.
 - xii. There has arisen a need for the following side proposal – for the purpose of ending the countless objections and contentions among us over the name of our coming country. Some have been saying that they do not like this or that name – for religious reasons. The proposal is that we should simply call our coming country YORUBALAND – in the way that very many nations in the world name their countries. The individual Yoruba person is a Yoruba; we all are the Yoruba nation or the Yoruba People; our language is the Yoruba language; and our country shall be Yorubaland – very soon!

FINALLY, We May Have to Hold a Referendum

Our peaceful processes towards our nation's self-determination is most likely to lead us to a **Referendum** – an event like a regular election at which we Yoruba will line up at the polls to vote for either self-determination or for the continued membership of our nation in Nigeria. The important question then is how do we get to a Referendum? Here are the possibilities:

1, Some nations seeking self-determination have been known to simply organize referendums for themselves – without waiting for the permission of the governments of their countries. Catalonia in Spain has done this, but their referendum was seriously obstructed by the Spanish government. Knowing Nigeria as we do, we must expect that if we try to hold a referendum by ourselves, the Nigerian Federal government will oppose us very brutally. So, for us, this is not a viable option.

2, If we appeal to the Nigerian Federal Government to organize a referendum for us or to allow us to hold a referendum, they will not oblige.

3, One of our organizations, Egbe Omo Oduduwa, has proposed that we should ask our Southwest State Governments to step forth and organize our referendum. Many of our other organizations have expressed support for this, confident that if we mount pressure sensibly and powerfully enough, we can get our governments to agree to do what we are asking them to do for us.

4, Many of our organizations believe rather that it is more fruitful to pin our hope on the United Nations Organization. In recent years, the UNO has stepped in in some places to organize referendums that led to immediate creation of new countries out of larger countries – for instance Timor Leste out of Indonesia, South Sudan from Sudan, etc.

Altogether, options 3 and 4 are our most reasonable options. Therefore, after we have set up our collaborative structure as proposed above, we must immediately set up task forces to lead us to the conclusion of 3 and 4.

*** * GOD ALMIGHTY, OLODUMARE, HAS LIFTED UP HIS MIGHTY HAND TO TAKE US YORUBA NATION OUT OF BONDAGE IN A DESTRUCTIVE NIGERIA AND TO SET US UP AS ONE OF THE GREATEST AND MOST PROSPEROUS NATION-STATES IN THE MODERN WORLD. AND WE KNOW THAT WHEN HIS MIGHTY HAND IS STRETCHED FORTH, NOTHING CAN BEND IT BACK.**