

H.E. President Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu,
President of Nigeria,
President's Office,
Aso Rock.

ABUJA FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY

NIGERIA

APRIL 17, 2024

Your Excellency, ,

We, Yoruba Self-determination Movement, leading the Yoruba self-determination struggle for the Yoruba sovereign state separate from Nigeria, have the honour to send to Your Excellency this important letter on behalf of the many millions of Yoruba people at home in Yorubaland in Nigeria and in the Yoruba Diaspora in almost all countries across the world. We send this letter most respectfully to Your Excellency as a follow-up to our earlier letter, dated August 06, 2022, which we delivered to your predecessor, President Muhammadu Buhari, in his exalted position then as President of Nigeria.

The central message of our earlier letter to President Buhari was that we Yoruba people of the Southwest parts of Nigeria, consisting of the Yoruba people of Ekiti State, Lagos State, Ogun State, Ondo State, Oshun State, Oyo State, and the Yoruba Local Government Areas of Kogi State and Kwara State, and the Itsekiri homeland of Delta State, altogether amounting to an estimated total population of sixty-million, desire to exercise and assert our self-determination as an indigenous nation, and therefore to constitute our whole homeland in Nigeria into a Yoruba sovereign state separate from the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

The second most important message in our said letter of August 06, 2022, to your predecessor, President Buhari, was our humble request that the Government of Nigeria should authorize and facilitate peaceful and orderly negotiation with us Yoruba nation with a view of reaching with us a mutually agreed and peaceful route for our separation from Nigeria. We wrote then as follows: "In conclusion, along the lines of our peaceful approach and respect for the Government and laws of Nigeria, we hereby express our wish to engage in negotiation with the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with a view to reaching a mutually agreed and peaceful route for the completion of our realization of our Yoruba nation's self-determination and establishment of a Yoruba sovereign nation-state, which steps we desire to accomplish as expeditiously as possible. For this purpose, we hereby propose as follows:

That the Nigerian Government shall, within the next two months, but not later than October 01, 2022, inform us that they have graciously agreed to our proposal for negotiation and that they have set up a negotiation team that will meet and dialogue with our Yoruba nation's representatives.

That as soon as we receive the communication from the Nigerian Government in response to this request of ours for negotiation, we shall forward the list of our negotiation delegates to the Nigerian Government.

That the Nigerian Government negotiation team and our negotiation team shall meet to appoint co-chair persons, to agree on a date for the first negotiation meeting, the negotiation procedure, and the negotiation venue.

That ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations shall be invited to send observers to the negotiation meetings".

To our grave disappointment, Your Excellency, President Buhari and the Nigerian Federal Government have never favoured our Yoruba nation with any response, or even an acknowledgement, to our August 06, 2022 letter to President Buhari.

We hereby, again very respectfully, send to you, Your Excellency, a copy of our August 06, 2022 letter which we wrote to President Buhari in his position as President of Nigeria. We assert that we stand totally and absolutely with all the points, and with every point, that we made in that letter. And we respectfully urge you, Mr. President, to do the duty of your high position as President of Nigeria and favour us with an official response not later than the last day of May 2024.

Your Excellency, in order to further enable, enrich and strengthen your understanding and consideration of our request for separation from Nigeria, we consider it very important that we should furnish you with the following further information concerning our request.

First, Your Excellency, Nigeria's economy has collapsed. Nigerians, including our Yoruba people, are living a life of wrenching poverty and hunger. Important roads have dilapidated for years in our Yoruba homeland. Electricity supply has been increasingly fizzling out for years. For decades, businesses have been failing or fleeing from Nigeria - mostly from our Yoruba homeland, the home of most of Nigeria's businesses before 1960. Almost all the businesses and industries that blessed our Yoruba homeland at independence in 1960 have shut down. Though Nigeria is one of the largest producers of petroleum in the world, Nigeria has depended on imported gasoline and has left its own refineries in disrepair, and the price of gasoline has been rising steadily in Nigeria for years. In the past nine months, the price of gasoline has jumped beyond the reach of most Nigerians.

Important holders of knowledge of the economy (such as a former Governor of the Nigerian Central Bank, C. Soludo, the new Minister of Finance, Wale Edun, the new National Security Adviser, Nuhu Ribadu, and others) are telling the world that the Nigerian economy had collapsed before President Tinubu took over from President Buhari - that Tinubu inherited a 'bankrupt country'. Therefore, the value of the Nigerian currency, the Naira, has fallen abominably, causing inflation to skyrocket, and pushing the prices of food staples beyond the reach of most citizens. In all regions of Nigeria, huge numbers of hungry people have protested in the streets, crying of hunger, condemning the Nigerian government and calling for the dissolution of Nigeria. The collapse of the Nigerian economy today is the end outcome of six decades of perpetual and truculent twisting, distortion, corruption and degradation of Nigeria's economic and political life.

Even if President Tinubu, by dint of knowledge and resoluteness, and with the help of the capable assistants whom he has brought into the government, succeeds in healing Nigeria's economy to an extent, Nigeria's economy will certainly return to its downward trajectory after him. The forces pushing Nigeria's economy downwards, including Nigeria's enormous culture of public corruption, are just too powerful. There is no other country in the world about whom Nigeria's kind of story can be told - the story of a country that earned for many years some of the largest revenues in the world from petroleum and that has continued to earn much of such revenues, and that has yet ended up as the number one home of 'extreme poverty' in the world, with millions of its citizens cursed by starvation, dilapidated infrastructures, failure of electricity supply,

and many more. Trying to lift up Nigeria's economy sustainably is a futile venture.

As you know very well, Mr. President, the collective psychology of our Yoruba people is fundamentally riveted to development, progress, prosperity, and a constantly improving quality of life for all citizens. Therefore, Your Excellency, it would amount to a betrayal of our people for us their prominent sons and daughters to consciously accept to continue to include our people in a country that is obviously producing economic collapse, and threatening terrible devastation for all. Secondly, Mr. President, as you know very well, and as the whole world knows, we Yoruba are a considerably well educated people. The programs of Free Primary Education commenced in our Yoruba homeland in the 1950s and extended up to Free Secondary Education in the 1970s, have produced the blessing that we Yoruba are very much an educated people. The younger sector of our population, our people of 18-50 years of age, are the most solidly educated generation among our adult population. The same generation, 18-50 years of age, amount to about 70% of our total population. The meaning and consequence of these facts are as follows. First, our youthful adults are, because of their education, a very dynamic and impatient population. Our men and women of this generation, unable to bear the serious depreciation of the Nigeria economy, the consequent high and escalating rate of unemployment in Nigeria since the 1990s, and the rising insecurity in Nigeria, have been fleeing in ever increasing numbers to other countries of the world for decades. Today, some estimates have it that more than 11-million members of this Yoruba generation have fled abroad and that the rate of their flight is increasing. No other nation in the world is losing population as heavily as this. The Yoruba nation in Nigeria is losing too heavy a part of its most educated and most dynamic population, is losing development capability, is bleeding too heavily, and is essentially breaking up. We Yoruba are troubled, even frightened, by this trend, and we strongly desire to stop it. We are sure that the only viable solution is to have a separate country of our own, a country in which we can build the national economy as competently as we are able to do, a country in which we can seriously and quickly revive our people's economy, a country that can attract back our exiles from all over the world. Your Excellency, we Yoruba seriously expect to have your sympathy and cooperation, and the sympathy and cooperation of the Federal Government of Nigeria, in this serious and noble enterprise.

Thirdly, Your Excellency, here is another important consideration that also relates to our highly educated youthful adult population. Almost all of our youthful adult people agree by now that our Yoruba nation should have its own separate country. Almost all of these Yoruba youthful adult population accept, up to this point, the peaceful and law-abiding approach to the self-determination process that the leaders of the struggle have been diligently promoting from the beginning. It is of uttermost importance that the Federal Government of Nigeria should relate to this process and leadership. There are already signs, though only faint signs for now, that educated Yoruba youthful adults in the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria, and their brethren in the Diaspora, may be becoming more and more radical in the struggle for Yoruba self-determination. If the Federal Government continues to make the mistake of neglecting response to the current peaceful process and leadership of the Yoruba struggle, a seriously undesirable situation could develop among the

generation of Yoruba youthful adults - a situation that could generate much violence and that could violently shred and rip Nigeria apart, cause floods of blood, and take countless lives.

This message must therefore be seen by you, Your Excellency, as a patriotic and humane warning to Nigeria. The serious criminal outburst that occurred in Ibadan during the weekend of April 11, 2024 needs to be carefully understood. The group which announced a take-over of government in Ibadan on April 11 was manifestly weak and incompetent at managing their action and its aftermath, but, even so, the rulers of the country ought to take it as a very important and surprising signal that the group did manage to attract to itself as many educated Yoruba youths as they did. The urgency has obviously arisen for the Federal Government to interact with the current responsible leadership of the Yoruba Self-determination struggle. Since the 1990s, various informed persons have been warning that a massive revolt by educated Yoruba youths could happen in the Yoruba homeland in Nigeria. We seem now to be coming close to such a revolt. From sporadic and unconfirmed reports reaching the public about the group of April 11, some of the young persons who were involved in that action are now telling friends and relations that the reason it was easy to deceive them into it was their fervent desire to have their Yoruba self-determination fulfilled, in which desire they were encouraged by some of their friends and brothers in the Diaspora. This does not sound good for Yorubaland and for Nigeria at all, and Yoruba and Nigerian leaders and rulers must respond to it with a serious sense of responsibility. Snippets of news that the Government is threatening fire and brimstone against all advocates of self-determination are very unhelpful - totally unhelpful.

Fourthly, Mr. President, another crucial matter that we Yoruba must bring before Your Excellency is the horrific and seriously disturbing character of the attitude and the utterly disrespectful approach of one of the nations of Nigeria, namely the Fulani nation, to the Federal Government and the sanctity, integrity and dignity of the Nigeria state and the public order. Since 2015, the Fulani have been killing widely among the other peoples of Nigeria, including us Yoruba, destroying farms, villages and other assets, kidnapping men, women and children, extorting large amounts of money as ransom from friends and family of the kidnapped, and repeatedly asserting their intention to seize the homelands of all the indigenous peoples of Nigeria for the purpose of turning all into a Fulani homeland. In the Middle Belt, horrendous blood-letting is going on, very many families have been forced into Internally Displaced People Camps, and many of their villages have been seized by the Fulani and renamed as Fulani villages. In our Yoruba homeland, our people are resisting somewhat better, but the Fulani attacks and killings and kidnappings are unrelenting and are coming daily, leading to horrific instability, and forcing most of our farmers to abandon farming altogether - thereby dooming Yoruba people to years and years of famine. According to an unofficial estimate, the Fulani have killed as many as 29,000 Yoruba people in the years since 2015.

All these actions by the Fulani are, to us Yoruba, a sufficient reason for our seeking to separate our Yoruba nation from Nigeria. Most of us Yoruba have no confidence in the 'Restructuring' that some of our most respected Yoruba leaders (such as our fathers in our highly exalted Afenifere) are advocating. And our reason is that we know that Restructuring cannot keep the Fulani marauders away from our homeland -

since, after Restructuring, the Fulani would still be Nigerians like us, and would still have full citizens' rights to come in large numbers, and with weapons and intent to kill and destroy and seize land, to our homeland. Their spokespersons have said again and again unambiguously that their Fulani nation has prepared all its citizens to fight their current war of subjugation and land seizure for decades and even centuries to come. We Yoruba must not underestimate the Fulani; we must not condemn our people to Fulani killings, destruction, raping, kidnapping and extortion of ransom for decades or centuries to come. Our Yoruba nation may not survive such prolonged battering.

Fifthly, Your Excellency, since your inauguration as President of Nigeria in May 2023, the Fulani have stepped onto such a higher level of national devastation as to add mightily to our reasons for seeking to separate our Yoruba nation from Nigeria. We ask you to witness, Your Excellency, the two declarations of war by the Fulani against the President and the Federal government of Nigeria and against the entire Nigerian polity. First Fulani Declaration of War, January 24, 2024:

In this first Declaration, the Fulani:

Demand "immediate release" of the leader of Miyetti Allah, Bello Bodejo, who was arrested for illegally creating an armed Fulani force which he intended to deploy to all states of Nigeria. The Fulani declaration commands: "We hereby reiterate our demand for the release of - - - Bello Bodejo. We hereby give 72 hours notice. Failure to release him, the Nigerian Government will hear from us".

Threaten that because the Fulani elders had failed to secure a Fulani successor or a person who would "protect Fulani interests", to succeed President Buhari in 2023, the Fulani have decided that their response is "Inevitable Jihad". "It is now obvious we have no option than to relaunch our campaign - - - (and we) have started in earnest. Henceforth the Nigerian Government will hear from us in every town, every village, every city, every community in the South and Middle Belt. Our campaign will be swift and decisive and nobody will be able to help Nigeria. The Fulani can never have a country where they are second class citizens. That is unacceptable".

Warn that "the arrest of any Fulani man in connection with the Jihad is a crime against our (Fulani) collective interest. We warn the Nigerian Government not to make the mistake of arresting any Fulani leader or person, never again".

Announce: "Our current effort in Plateau will not cease until the infidels are suppressed and the Jihad - - installed in every part of Nigeria to the glory of our Father, Uthman Dan Fodio".

Command that no Fulani must be arrested in connection with a powerful bomb explosion which occurred in a street of Ibadan on January 16, 2024 - the bomb blast that shook all parts of the large city of Ibadan, sank many houses on the street, destroyed many more houses, killed seven people and wounded 80 people. The Fulani Declaration threatened, "If any Fulani man be arrested, be assured that our response will be total, ruthless and immediate. "Expect more bombings in every public places (sic) across the South, Middle Belt and Abuja from the month of February 2024".

Order all Fulani to take to arms: "We call on all our Fulani brothers to take the war into the enemy territory, in Plateau, Enugu, Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt, Makurdi, until the infidel governments are brought down".

Add, "We call on non-Fulani people to vacate Plateau, Kaduna and Benue States if they are not ready to live under the inevitable Jihad which will eventually be all over Nigeria".

Second Fulani Declaration of War

In this second Declaration, the Fulani announce:

"The Fulani Jihad: Full blown and we have no apologies"

Then they added:

"It is like the present Government wants to dare us. Let them be told that we shall burn down everything in Nigeria and we don't care".

"This present President is not our President. He is deceiving himself with this so called Muslim/Muslim arrangements. Who cares? We care only about what our Father Uthman Dan Fodio laid down. Not your religion".

"We are going to Aso Rock and nobody will stop us. We shall take over the seat of Government which is our right and we shall direct every other operations from there".

"Forget the Military. Are they not in our pocket? Are they not working for us?"

"As for the Hausas, those fools know better. They either live under this Jihad or perish like the rest of the unbelievers. We don't care their religion. We are burning down both their Mosques and Churches. They are weak and stupid. They present no resistance.

"The Yorubas think they have a President. Let them sleep and enjoy themselves. What we did to them in Ilorin shall be child's play. They have seen what we are able to do in recent times to them. They are cowards and weak".

"But the Middle Belt think they are strong. But what type of bravery without weapons? We shall make sure they have nothing to defend themselves with. We are almost done with them. They should remember what we did in Kaduna through our brother when we were in Government. These are very good lands".

"We have no apologies and we have started. Our Royal Fathers are proud of us. History has bestowed in our hands to accomplish. There is no going back".

NOTE:

a. Both of these Declarations of War were proclaimed by the top Fulani organization named FULANI NATIONALIST MOVEMENT (FUNAM), and were signed by its President and Vice, Umar Amir Shehu and Badu Salisu Ahmadu.

b. At the same time as the Fulani Nationalist Movement has been issuing their Declarations of War, leading members of the Fulani traditional and political elite (the Sultan, Emirs, former Presidents and Vice-Presidents of Nigeria, former Ministers in the Nigerian Federal Government, former and current members of the Nigerian National Assembly, etc), all of whom never raised a voice against President Buhari's egregious misgovernment and hideous corruption for eight years, have been vociferously and persistently castigating President Tinubu over virtually every official action of his, threatening that their Northern masses would rebel against him, and threatening that the Nigerian military would sack his government. The Fulani elite seem to be saying in effect that they intend to make Nigeria ungovernable for President Tinubu, and that they would never accept any official action of his.

YORUBA RESPONSE

We Yoruba are a civilized modern people; we attach the greatest importance to citizens' respect for the sanctity, integrity and dignity of public authority; and we are sure that all public order and good

depend on these conditions. We find it extremely difficult to continue to accept to be part of a country in which any one of the constituent peoples feels free to treat their country and its government as the Fulani are treating Nigeria, the Nigerian President, the Nigerian Federal Government, and all the governments and peoples of the Nigerian Federation, today. We are sure that the Fulani acts of terror and destruction against other Nigerian peoples are criminal acts. We are sure too that most of what the Fulani are saying in their Declarations of War against the President, the Federal Government and the other governments and peoples of Nigeria, are serious crimes. We as a people concede that it is the prerogative of the Nigerian Federal Government to deal with crimes as it chooses; but we as a people are clearly opposed to continuing to participate in a state entity in which the Government seems to lack the systemic strength, the political will, and the moral confidence to treat crimes as crimes and criminals as criminals. We believe that a situation like that portends a horrific deepening of the already deep anarchy and economic failure of Nigeria, and that it promises to galvanize Nigeria to an all encompassing violence and war which would consume millions of Nigerian lives and export disaster and human suffering to the rest of West Africa. We Yoruba cannot consent any longer to being a part of such an inevitable and imminent disaster.

OUR CLOSING WORDS

Your Excellency, the above, plus all the matters raised by us in our letter to President Muhammadu Buhari and dated August 06, 2022, a copy of which letter we hereby respectfully attach to this letter, is the fullness of our respectful message to Your Excellency.

Your Excellency, we Yoruba Self-determination Movement, acting for and on behalf of our 60-million Yoruba people of the Ekiti State, Lagos State, Ogun State, Ondo State, Oshun State, and Oyo State, plus the Yoruba Local Government Areas of Kogi State and Kwara State, and plus the Itshekiri homeland of Delta State, all together constituting the Yorubaland in Nigeria, hereby most humbly place our crowning request before Your Excellency as follows:

That the Nigerian Federal Government shall, within the next two months, but not later than June 15, 2024, inform us Yoruba Self-determination Movement that the Nigerian Federal Government have graciously agreed to our proposal for negotiation and that they have set up a negotiation team that will meet and dialogue with our Yoruba nation's negotiation team. That as soon as we receive the communication from the Nigerian Federal Government in response to this request of ours for negotiation, we shall forward the list of our negotiation team to the Nigerian Federal Government.

That the Nigerian Federal Government's negotiation team and our negotiation team shall meet to appoint co-chair persons, to agree on a date for the first negotiation meeting, to the negotiation venue, and to the negotiation agenda and process.

That the Nigerian Federal Government shall invite the United Nations, African Union and the Economic Community of West African States, to send observers to the negotiation meetings".

Your Excellency, please accept the best assurance of our highest regards and our best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Banji Akintoye, National Leader Yoruba Self-determination Movement.
Chief Sunday Adeyemo Igboho, Leader Yoruba National Defence.

Otunba Ola Ademola, Vice-Chairman Yoruba Self-determination Movement.