



NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS

MOTTO: LABOUR CREATES WEALTH

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Press Statement

Arrest growing insecurity NOW

We have watched with absolute concern, the ongoing skirmishes in some parts of the country where there have been growing trends of agitations that are now clearly leading to inter-ethnic attacks in both physical and verbal terms resulting in the deployment of military and other security personnel and curfews in two major cities in Abia and Plateau states.

For us, as a pan Nigerian organisation, we have always emphasised the need for peace as a very important item on the table of anyone, organisation or individual interested in the development of the entire country or any part of the country because whatever has led to underdevelopment or decelerated our collective development as a country or community or region could be anything but ethnic revulsion.

As far as we are concerned, our country's state of underdevelopment has been occasioned by lack of good governance for which several past governments can be held responsible. No part of the country has deliberately been underdeveloped by any government based on ethnic hatred or anti region dispositions.

Indeed, as it is clear, most problems in the states are caused mainly by the attitude of the various state governments who receive allocations for infrastructural development of communities in the states and payment of salaries but chose to divert such allocations to other uses or embezzle such funds with impunity. There can be no other threat to the lives of the citizens than when workers are denied access to food and qualitative life through non-

payment of salaries for months. Those driving the causes that has led to the prevailing challenges are yet to confront their state governors on this.

We have had several quarterly national dialogues as a labour centre and a major stakeholder on the promotion of peace, security and national development of our country; and have concluded that the challenges we have that has now become references for the advancement of ethnic or regional agitations directed towards disunity and promotion of inter-ethnic discord, including violent attacks and threats is the absence of productive employment, depleting industrial growth, near collapse of major infrastructures among others. And every part of the country suffer these and the impact do not differ in regional or ethnic terms.

It is therefore unfortunate that some individuals across the country has chosen to use these collective deprivations to advance causes that indeed counter their aspiration for development.

The unity of Nigeria has been our collective strength as a people and no part of Nigeria can develop without the other, even on the terms and principles of the subsisting world socio economic order.

While we applaud the Federal Government for the steps taken so far by security agencies to secure lives and properties of all Nigerians in all parts of the country, it is important that the agencies, including the military should not act in any manners that provokes situations that ultimately strengthen the cause, capacities and popularity of the advocates of disunity and inter-ethnic strife.

It is unacceptable that journalists carrying out their legitimate functions can be so dastardly attacked as has been reported of the incident in Umuahia during a security operation by the Nigeria Army. It is the duty of journalists to report, including taking pictures, audio and video recording of incidents anywhere in the country as part of their professional calling. The attacks on them, especially at the secretariat of Nigeria Union of Journalists in Umuahia is not only unacceptable but unnecessarily provocative. Although the Nigeria Army has issued a public statement to apologise to the NUJ and the affected journalists while promising to investigate the incident and ultimately discipline the military personnel involved, we advise that the military high command should re-train its officers and men on contemporary ways of handling security challenges in a country under constitutional governance.

Our governments, and indeed none of us as individual or corporate citizens should allow the current situation degenerate any further.

Culprits of threats to our national integrity, nationhood and sovereignty must be apprehended and tried in accordance with extant national laws and international conventions without taking any further steps that will create another mayhem as we have been contending with in the north east.



Comrade Ayuba Wabba, mni
President