

## **Public Statement By Intersociety-Nigeria**

### **Reorganization Of The Nigeria Police Force Via Promotion, Posting & Retirement Of Its Senior Officers, & Removal Of Roadblocks: The Journey Is Still Far**

(Onitsha Nigeria, Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2012)-The leadership of International Society for Civil Liberties & the Rule of Law-Intersociety, wishes to speak on recent developments in the Nigeria Police Force especially as it affects the promotion, posting and retirement of its senior officers including those in the rank of AIGs, as well as the removal of over 3,000 police roadblocks countrywide, particularly in the Southeast geopolitical zone, by the Acting Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mohammed Dikko Abubakar.

In the area of promotion of Mr. Suleiman D. Fakai, Mr. Atiku Yusuf Kafur and Mr. Haruna John (Northwest & Northeast); Mr. Abdurahaman O. Akano(Southwest); Mr. Emmanuel Kachi Udeoji(Southeast);Mr. Peter Yisa Gana(North-central); and Mr. Marvel Akpoyibo(South-south) as the Deputy Inspectors General of Police and members of the Nigeria Police Management Team, we note with satisfaction the fulfillment of geopolitical equity and fair observation of Section 14(3) of the Constitution of Nigeria 1999 as amended, as per the Federal Character Principle. The promotion is also ethno-religiously coherent. The above indicates that the Northeast has two new DIGs; Northwest one; North-central one; Southwest one; South-south one and Southeast one.

But in the list containing the 13 newly promoted AIGs, from the rank of Commissioners of Police, gross geopolitical lopsidedness, which is also totally at variance with Section 14(3) of the Constitution of Nigeria 1999 as amended is manifest. The list contains the following names with blatant exclusion of the Southeast geopolitical zone-a major partner in the Nigerian Project; they are: AIGs Solomon E. Olusegun and David O. Omojola (South-west);Orubebe Ghandi Ebikeme, Michael Zuokumor and Solomon Arase (South-south); Joseph Ibi and Dan'azumi Job Doma(North-central) and Muktari Ibrahim, Suleiman Abba, Mamman Ibrahim Tsafe, Saliu Argungu Hashimu, Jonathan Johnson and Philemon Leha (North-west & North-east). In the list above, all the geopolitical zones in Nigeria except the Southeast zone are represented by, at least, two AIGs. There are eminently qualified Commissioners of Police and Deputy Commissioners of Police of the Southeast extraction, but the Police Service Commission chose to be manifestly bias, not minding the danger of such grossly lopsided constitutional decision.

Our suspicion of the PSC's utter bias and well crafted plans to annihilate the all-important Southeast zone from the top command structure of the Nigeria Police Force became clearer when the Commission recently retired 15 AIGs(Assistant Inspectors General of Police) from the Force in line with powers vested on it by the Constitution of Nigeria 1999 as amended and the Police Service Commission Establishment Act No.15 of 2001. It is important to point out that some of them retired statutorily because they have reached their mandatory age of retirement.

As expected, the 13 newly promoted AIGs are to replace and take over the positions left by the 15 retired AIGs. The names of the 15 affected AIGs are as follows: AIGs Aloysius Okorie, Johnson Uzuegbunam, Ephraim Amakulor and Dr. Madueke Dax Uzu (Southeast); Mohamed Zarewa, Bukar Maina, Saidu Daya, Danlami Yar'adua, Muazu Idris Hadejia and Mohammed Abbas(North-west & Northeast); Shehu Babalola, Christopher Ola and John Moronike( Southwest); and Stephen Dienye Heart and Charles Cole( South-south). The above indicates that four AIGs were retired from the Southeast zone; six from the Northwest and Northeast zones; three from the South-west zone; two from the South-south zone; and possibly, none from the North-central zone.

The remaining AIGs deemed serving in the NPF (about 19) including the 13 newly promoted ones are: Jingi Misau Mohammed, Ibrahim P. Machi, Abubakar Mohammed, Ibrahim B. Ahmed, Muktari Ibrahim, Suleiman A. Abba, Mamman Ibrahim Tsafe, Saliu Argungu Hashimu, Jonathan Johnson and Philemon Leha(Northwest & Northeast); Michael Zoukumor, Orubebe Ghandi Ebikeme and Solomon Arase(South-south); Dan'azumi Job Doma and Joseph Ibi(North-central); and Christopher Ademola, Solomon E. Olusegun, Ilesanmi Aguda and David O. Omojola( Southwest). Sadly, the Southeast geopolitical zone is left with no newly promoted and serving AIG. The list above shows that the Northwest and the Northeast geopolitical zones including mixed religious States of Adamawa and Taraba have ten deemed serving AIGs; North-central two; Southwest four; South-south three and Southeast zero. We were made to understand that AIG Donald Iroham, whom we thought is the remaining AIG from the Southeast zone statutorily retired in late 2011, thereby leaving the zone with no serving AIG. This is totally unacceptable and grossly unconstitutional. That a geopolitical zone that is so endangered in the porous Nigerian Project, not minding its dominant population of over 40million people, out of the country's estimated 150 million peoples of over 250 ethnic nationalities, could be denied access to AIG-ship, out of the 19 deemed serving AIGs, is totally abominable and impeachable. There used to be about 22 serving AIGs in the Nigeria Police Force before the ongoing re-organization exercise commenced few weeks ago, out of this number, 12 manned the NPF's 12 strategic zonal commands, while others manned strategic police training schools and top police administrative offices including inter-services organizations.

Also, there were about 90 Commissioners of Police (CPs) serving in the NPF before the recent promotions and retirements, which saw about 18 of them elevated to the ranks of DIGs and AIGs, thereby reducing them to about 72, out of this number, 37 are CPs in-charge of the 36 State Police Commands and the Federal Capital Territory-Abuja. Sadly, the Southeast geopolitical zone is totally short-changed in the arrangement, in terms geopolitical allocation of CPs. Out of the said 90 CPs, the Southeast zone has about six, instead of equitable fifteen, in accordance with constitutional geopolitical equity. Another dangerous policy perpetually designed to castrate the Southeast zone from participating equitably in the Nigeria's collective security management as per police and policing, is "rank and promotion stagnancy", whereby officers of the Southeast extraction in the NPF are rarely

**promoted as and when due, while their colleagues from other geopolitical zones particularly the Northwest and the Northeast, are regularly promoted and assigned to man strategic formations. Most of the few available DCPs, CPs, AIGs and DIGs of Southeast extraction in the NPF are promoted few months to their statutory retirements. This very dangerous policy is also found in the Federal Judiciary, Army, Navy and Air Force. There are many Southeast university graduates who are still in the ranks of Sergeants and Inspectors or their equivalents scattered in the NPF and other statutory security agencies in Nigeria. Apart from being university graduates, they have spent many years in their respective security agencies without corresponding promotions and portfolio allotments.**

**As if these were not enough, in the list containing posting of 61 CPs and allotment of portfolios to them, released today (11<sup>th</sup> day of March 2012), by the acting IGP, Mr. Mohammed Dikko Abubakar, only six CPs of the Southeast extraction made the list, out of which, only four are posted to States as CPs in-charge of the affected State Commands. They are: Chinweke Asadu, Ikemufena Okoye, Ezechukwu Osita and Ikechukwu Aduba, while Kingsley O. Omire and Benjamin Onwuka are non-State CPs. Interestingly, there are sixteen CPs named from the Southwest alone, out of this number, seven are State CPs and nine are non-State CPs. There are 22 Northwest and Northeast Muslim CPs; fourteen are State CPs, and eight are non-State CPs. There are also ten CPs of the South-south extraction and seven CPs from the North-central or Middle-Belt. Gender injustice was also manifest, as only three; out of the 61 CPs are women. This is a clear case of distributive injustice and mother of all lopsidedness. It is also unknown to the Constitution of Nigeria 1999 as amended.**

**Consequently, we call for an end to this age-long dangerous policy against the innocuous people of the Southeast and women of Nigeria. Henceforth, the zone would no longer tolerate and accept any tribal and lopsided military or para-military policy designed overtly or covertly to hinder it from being fully involved in the key security decision making in Nigeria. The Police Service Commission must reverse this dangerous policy promptly and inexcusably. The ongoing re-organization of the NPF is an ample opportunity to correct the dangerous anomaly. Since the number of AIGs in the NPF recently was up to 22 before the NPF re-organization exercise, they should be increased to equitable 24, so as to give each geopolitical zone equitable four, in the spirit of geopolitical equity and Section 14(3) of the Constitution of Nigeria 1999 as amended. Also, the number of serving CPs in the NPF should be increased to its original 90, so as to give each geopolitical zone equitable fifteen. In the area of the 37 States and the FCT CPs, each geopolitical zone should be given six equitable CPs, while the FCT area should have the remaining one. The “rank and promotion stagnancy” policy clearly targeted against the Southeast zone must be done away with and replaced with detribalized, meritorious and knowledge-based promotions and portfolio allotments.**

Over the years, these lopsided security policies against the Southeast zone have led to thousands of its people being massacred by ethno-religious killer-entities, sometimes backed by senior security agents including senior police officers from “fundamentalized” ethno-religious enclaves. It is an indisputable fact that the ratio of reactive policing for the citizens-in-danger in Nigeria particularly during ethno-religious violence hugely disfavors the Southeast people resident in other parts of the country, particularly in the northern part, as against high frequency reactive policing of the northerners resident in the south. All these are rooted in the cannibalistic and barbarous policies above stated because the Southeast barely has key security chiefs in the NPF top management team that would defend its interests when the need arises. The inherent gross anomaly in the AIG-ship must be addressed frontally and inexcusably as a matter of uttermost urgency and importance.

#### **Why We Support Mass Retirement Of AIGs & CPs:**

Though we still maintain that the present management of the Nigeria Police Service Commission, headed by retired DIG Parry Osayande, is a failure by any standard, but it enjoys our support over the mass retirement of the AIGs from the NPF (Nigeria Police Force). It is correct to say that the rot in the Force is totally sustained by most of its CPs and AIGs with support from some elements within the PSC and the oversight legislative bodies. The present PSC, since its re-constitution in 2007, appeared to have aided and abetted the rot in the NPF. This is more so when its chairman is a retired DIG (Deputy Inspector General)- which makes him a likely candidate of police corruption. But, in terms of the reported mass retirement of senior officers of the NPF including CPs and AIGs, our support for the Police Service Commission (PSC) is total. We can submit without any iota of fear that the PSC has heeded key aspects of our various recent recommendations, though it failed woefully in the area of geopolitical equity as per allocation of AIG-ship. To put the record straight, we are not against the mass retirement of AIGs carried out recently, which we understand, is ongoing, but we were, and still are opposed to the lopsided geopolitical allocation of the exercise as well as lopsided geopolitical allocation of the newly promoted AIGs. We have since accepted the geopolitical allocation of the seven newly promoted DIGs and thanked the PSC for such a good step, even though the PSC itself is as messy as the NPF.

It is very important to point out that the theory of “seniority, experience, age of service, education and competence” as being touted by the disgraced senior police officers in Nigeria does not hold water in a corrupted, tainted, disorganized, demoralized, morally bankrupted and incompetent setting such as the present Nigeria Police Force. It is a well-established fact that there is seniority of roguery, crooked age of service, expertise or experience in roadblock thievery, illiteracy education and competence of mediocrity in the top echelon of the NPF, which have been traditionalized over the years. From the acting IGP’s recent public statement in Abuja, it may be safe to submit that pressures on him to return police extortion points or “roadblocks” in over 3,000 locations country-wide particularly in the Southeast zone (over 1,500) originated from most of these “senior” AIGs and CPs so

as to continue business as usual with uttermost impunity. As for those that have gone to court to challenge their justifiable retirements, it is a welcome development that they opted for due process, but we doubt if they can sustain their prayers considering the fact that their service files are likely to be termite-ridden. The office of Nigeria's Attorney General, the Police Affairs Ministry and the PSC's lawyers should dig up the service files of these senior officers and peruse them so as to proof to the court that they are too incompetent, corrupt and dirty to continue as serving senior officers of the NPF in accordance with the spirit of the NPF re-organization. The mass retirement exercise should continue and be extended to those in the rank of CPs provided it will not be used to target any ethnic-religious part or geopolitical entity in Nigeria.

#### **We Thank Nigerians, Media, Diplomats, Friends & International Bodies:**

We remain eternally grateful to Nigerians especially the media including the print; visual, audio-visual and Nigerian-owned web media organizations overseas for their wonderful supports during our fierce advocacy against police corruption as per roadblock extortion and other forms of police criminality. The managements of Human Rights Watch (USA) and Amnesty International (UK) including their Nigerian researchers are also commended, so also Uche Wisdom Chambers in Owerri and Abuja, Iguh per Nwamaka Iguh Chambers in Onitsha, Madam Ayoola Obe(ex-CLO boss), Dr. Josephine Odumakin(CD boss), Barr. Innocent Anaba of Vanguard, Joel Nwokeoma of Punch, the managements of the Business Hallmark, Tell, Insider and Source Magazines, Ms. Mercy Ngozi Alu (US based musician & rights advocate), Madam Alice Ukoko(Founder-Women of Africa, UK), Okey Nwanguma( NOPRIN-Lagos), Barr. Francis Mouneke(CLEEN-Owerri), Chief Charles Okereke(CEO-Nigeria-Masterweb, USA), Barr Daniel Elomba( Publisher-Elomba.Com, USA), Omoyale Sowore(Publisher-Saharareporters, USA), Chief Odera(Publisher-Odera. Com, China), Republic Reports (USA), Zimbabwean and Sierra-Leone Times, the Chief Prosecutor for ICC (Switzerland), the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (Switzerland), the US Consular General in Nigeria and the Secretary General of the Commonwealth via his Human Rights Unit (UK). Struggle is worth struggling for, if it is result-oriented, among others. We also have not forgotten our fiery local reporters in Onitsha and Awka-Anambra State of Nigeria. We thank them immensely especially Citizens Emmanuel Obe(Punch), Alphonsus Nweze (Champion), Ijeoma Onuora, Geoffrey Anyanwu& Emma Uzor (Sun), The Moment, Cyprian Ebele & Tony Okafor (Compass), Vincent Ujumadu & Chima Nwiwu(Vanguard), Chuks Ilozue (Daily Independent), Jude Atupulazi (Next & Fides), Don Eleke (Leadership), Barr. Charles Okeke(National Mirror), Uzoma Nzeagwu( Guardian), George Adimike, Kingsley & Emeka Odogwu( the Nation), Tony Oraeki( Pilot) and the ABS and the Minaj TV Managements, among others.

#### **Removal Of Police Roadblocks Must Remained Irreversible:**

While appreciating the acting Inspector General of Police, Mr. Mohammed Dikko Abubakar, for his bold step in saving teeming Nigerians in the hands of extortionist and homicidal police road-blockers, by ordering the removal of over 3,000 roadblocks on Nigerian roads including over 1,500 of them dotting the Southeast

roads, we wish to state that we are monitoring the extent of its compliance country-wide with a view not to making any premature public statement on same for the time being. In the meantime, we ask that the order should be sustained in line with the acting IGP's recent statement that roadblock pattern of security is a colonial inheritance and therefore, outdated. The back of corrupt junior and senior police officers across the country should be carefully watched at all times, because they are capable of creating and engineering violent crimes especially bank, highway and other public violent robberies so as to allow a return to the status quo with utter impunity.

**Signed:**

**Emeka Umeagbalasi, Chairman, Board of Trustees  
International Society for Civil Liberties & the Rule of Law-Intersociety, Nigeria  
+234(0) 8033601078,+234(0)8180103912  
[info@intersociety-ng.org](mailto:info@intersociety-ng.org),[umeagbalasi@yahoo.com](mailto:umeagbalasi@yahoo.com)**

**Comrade Justus Ijeoma  
Head, Publicity Desk  
+234(0) 37114869**