



For Immediate Release

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PRESS RELEASE: NIGERIA CANNOT BE RULED BY PRESS STATEMENTS

The Citizens for Nigeria (CFN) is concerned by the sneaky return of Nigeria's ailing President Umaru Yar'Adua into the country like a thief. The ostensibly forced evacuation from the Saudi Arabian hospital on the same day President Yar'Adua was expected to be visited by a six-man Nigerian government delegation reeks of opportunism, deceit, conspiracy, maneuvering and a readiness to further fragment the nation that had just begun to recover from his 93-day absence from office without leave.

For a president who had called himself a servant-leader, Nigerians cannot expect worse from a dictator. The esoteric way he had gone out of the country, stayed abroad incommunicado and returned without reassigning power are not the ways of a so-called servant, but the methods of a care-free and selfish leader.

In hindsight, it is more than likely that the scamming on Nigerians began even before Mr. Yar'Adua was smuggled out without a hand-over note or proper delegation of duties to an elected Vice President. It is reasonable to assume the deceit had begun before we were made to believe he was about to present his budget to a disagreeing National Assembly. It does not appear Mr. Yar'Adua would have been able, or intended to present any budget. But if that assertion were not true, it is evident that Nigerians had received nothing but lies from the day it became known the President was sick and was hospitalized in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

One of these official lies, which is certainly deserving of investigation for possible criminal offences, include a signature purportedly provided by Mr. Yar'Adua on Nigeria's budget while supposedly in a state of unconsciousness. The CFN is of the position that this unusual act of political deception fits the highest level of crime against our nation and should be probed by the Federal Ministry of Justice without delay. Another untruth fed was the unverified, ridiculous but entertaining radio interview reportedly granted by the President to the BBC remotely in Hausa language on the day protesters gathered in Abuja to demand for his whereabouts. It is even more ridiculous and quite laughable to think that Nigeria's president would use such a foreign medium as the BBC to address Nigerians over such an important matter. The Nigerian people were simply not amused by such arrant nonsense.

If Nigerian national lawmakers respect themselves, the laws of the country and the very governmental institutions they are part of, nothing should stand in the way of immediate investigation of these two referenced incidents, among many other apparently misleading activities of the Yar'Adua administration.

However, the problem that we should be more concerned about today is not how many lies this Yar'Adua administration has told Nigeria, but how the Presidency has become hijacked by a cabal that is unrelenting in its efforts at taking advantage of Mr. Yar'Adua's unfortunate health problems. For a president who is apparently no longer innately aware of events around him, having a dangerous cabal that is enforcing its wishes upon Nigerians under the guise of "protecting the president" is the height of political absurdity. The dangerous and illegal actions of this political cabal amount to a most unhealthy circumstance that can only compare in seriousness to the president's secretive ailment and treatment. If this situation is not immediately arrested, the callous activities of this greedy group could quickly destabilize the nation.

This cabal, we dare say, include the President's own wife, Mrs. Turai Yar'Adua, some cabinet ministers and presidential aides. From media reports and other sources of information over the past three months of this saga, it is the same few people who brought a probably vegetative President back into the country to cause serious damage to the fragile peace restored when the National Assembly resolved to make Mr. Goodluck Jonathan the Acting President.

In two weeks of Mr. Jonathan's ascendancy, he had hosted a number of important international figures and reclaimed Nigeria's leadership of the Economic Community of West African States. These events, small as they may look, have helped to restore international confidence in Nigeria's political status and positioned the Jonathan Administration in readiness to get all hands back to work.

Just as we were all relishing the possible avoidance of potential military intervention, the cabal feeding on Mr. Yar'Adua's incapacitation has swooped on Abuja, ready to fight, steal and destroy by the overnight return under heavy military guard of Mr. Yar'Adua without any knowledge or authorization by the Acting President.

We unequivocally stand against this cabal, and call on all Nigerians to consider a resistance to their sleek move, to safeguard our future as a nation. If we sit idly and fail to resist, we may be kissing Nigeria a nice good-bye.

The only condition on which we should allow President Yar'Adua to reclaim his office is for him to appear on prime time television to deliver a nationally-broadcast press conference, not an address, and take questions from journalists from the broad spectrum of the media.

In addition, we require Mr. Yar'Adua to perform before the end of the week, official duties such as holding the meeting of his cabinet and appearing in publicly-recorded official events where he would talk directly to Nigerians who have the right to know the truth about his health condition.

Press statements, no matter how many, can no longer suffice for the President's public appearance and assurance. We need to know that not only is the President alive, but alive and well and able to work. No employer will allow an unconscious worker back to work. Nigerians, who gave Mr. Yar'Adua this job at Aso Rock, cannot welcome him back without a proof of good health by public appearance. Seeing is believing!

Anything short of this assurance of Mr. Yar'Adua's ability to work will be unacceptable. Those who are shielding him from the people who elected him, and deserve to know if he is able to do the job they employed him to do, are shameless, uncivilized and have shown not the slightest respect for the Nigerian citizens. It is just a show of superiority, unreliability, inaccessibility and incivility by another Nigerian leader or his cohorts, even if he called himself a servant-leader. Assuming that President Yar'Adua has actually authored any of the statements credited to him lately, his words have become meaningless since his spiteful refusal to allow the nation to be managed according to common sense and the law to which he claimed to be a fan and dutiful adherent.

No longer should Nigerians tolerate this sort of attitude from its leaders. From this day, until when we see and confirm our President is hale and hearty, we, Nigerians at home and abroad, should let our voices be heard everywhere in the world by asking Mrs. Turai Yar'Adua to take her husband out of the State House to go recuperate quietly away from public gaze or glare. Instead of privately nursing her husband back to life, this wildly ambitious First Lady has chosen to engage in political power tussle. Well, it will suffice here to say Nigerians don't know her in the sense of an office holder. She is neither an elected nor appointed public official. She just happens to be a spouse of the President. The people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria need to neutralize Mrs. Turai Yar'Adua with the voice of reason, resoundingly everywhere!

We should all be protesting or rioting, if that is what it takes. If we don't, the progressives in military will eventually demonstrate to us how stupid we all are when they come to resolve the ensuing senseless and moronic power tussle initiated by the political cabal that currently appears bent on destabilizing and destroying Nigeria for their selfish ulterior agenda.

Respectfully yours,



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Note: The Citizens for Nigeria (CFN) has a central objective of bringing ordinary Nigerians into the political process, whether they are at home or abroad. The CFN was formed out of the realization that Nigerians are suffering because the leaders have hijacked power completely from the citizens, and voters have lost hope in the democratic process.