

SEIZURE OF 661 PUMP ACTION RIFLES; THE MERCHANTS OF DEATH AND CULPABLE OFFICIALS MUST BE BROUGHT TO BOOK – CACOL

How porous our borders are to the perpetration of illegalities was once again made manifest in the recent seizure of the 661 rifles by men of the Nigeria Customs Service in Lagos, the *Centre for Anti-Corruption and Open Leadership, CACOL* have said, through its Executive Chairman, Mr Debo Adeniran.

He was peaking against the background of the seizure of 661 pump action rifles imported into the country from China

illegally by men of the Federal Operations Unit, Nigeria Customs Service at Mile 2, on Lagos. 49 boxes of munitions concealed with steel doors and other



merchandise goods in a 40ft container were reported have been seized on January 22, 2017, with some of the importers and officers of the NCS arrested.

Adeniran said, “the incident explains widespread of illegal arms ammunitions in the country. So the incident itself cannot be too surprising for most discerning Nigerians who had understood prior to now known that the country has been sitting on 'a keg of gun-powder' for long”

“We see almost only daily basis, the reckless display of even more powerful and sophisticated weapons by militants,

insurgents, kidnappers, armed robbers etc has their activities have continue to put the

country in a state of catastrophic equilibrium. This particular incident happening at this particular time when violence is being preached and promoted in the country makes the whole scenario scary and

dangerous.

What just need to ask ourselves what those ammunitions were being brought in the country for the and the danger and wariness of the situation

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The Centre for Anti-Corruption and Open Leadership (CACOL) was established in August 2007 to exert pressures on anti-graft agencies to investigate and prosecute known corrupt leaders in Nigeria. CACOL also undertakes to sensitize Nigerians to Name, Nail, Shame and Shun Corrupt Leaders Anywhere, Everywhere to serve as deterrent that corruption does not pay. CACOL is primarily funded by affiliate and individual members but also seeks support from public-spirited individuals, corporate bodies and donor agencies. This DIGEST is supported by First Faculty Ventures - an organizational development consultancy firm. For further information contact: The Executive Chairman, CACOL, The Humanity Center, 610 Lagos-Abeokuta Expressway, Ijaye-Ojokoro, Lagos, Nigeria. Phone: 01-4736534, 08037194969, 08023226276, E-mail: cacolc@yahoo.com, cacol@thehumanitycentre.org, Website: www.corruptionwatchng.com, www.cacol.thehumanitycentre.org. Editor: Wale Salami

CORRUPTION WATCH

Name, Nail, Shame and Shun Corrupt Leaders Anywhere, Everywhere

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BUHARI'S LETTERS TO THE SENATE: CONFIRM MAGU, BABACHIR SHOULD RESIGN; THE CASES ARE DISSIMILAR! - CACOL

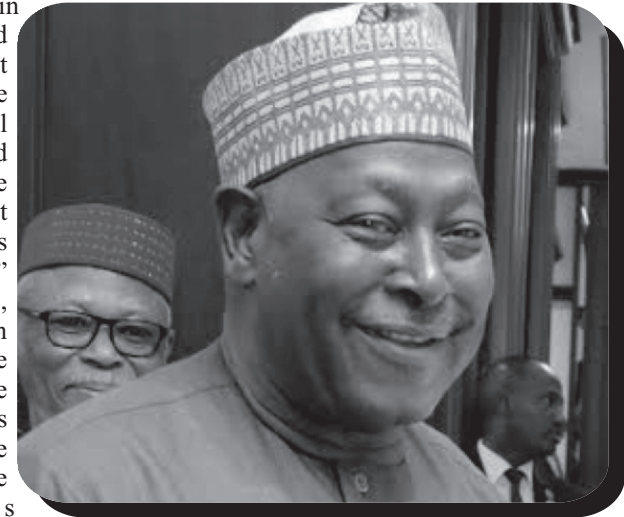
Sequel to President Muhammadu Buhari's recent letters to the Senate on its positions on the nomination of Mr. Ibrahim Magu, acting Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC and demand for the resignation of Mr. Babachir Lawal, as Secretary General of the Federation, SGF, the Centre for Anti-Corruption and Open Leadership, CACOL has highlighted the need to identify the differences in the circumstances surrounding the situations.

“There is the imperative need to separate Magu's case and that of Babachir. This is how we can put the issues in proper perspective so as not to muddle up things in moving forward with out compromising the rule of law and logical reasoning. And perhaps, it is the reason the President wrote separate letters on the cases.”

MrDebo Adeniran, Executive Chairman of CACOL said while responding to the separate letters written to the Senate by President on the rejection of his nomination of Magu for EFCC Chairman and the demand for the removal of Babachir as SGF based on allegations of corruption.

He said, “In Babachir's case, he obviously has a lot to answer for, as far as the allegations against him are concerned, as against the clearance by the President which suggests that he has not been found wanting, the SGF has to step aside to

thoroughly clear himself of the misconducts his being accused of.”



Babachir-David-Lawal

“Unlike Magu's situation, which we can adduce by logical reasoning that it is 'corruption is fighting back' we cannot say the same of Babachir because he plays no fundamental role in the fight against corruption. Added to this is that he is being

accused of something as grievous and inhuman as tampering with the management of the funds meant for Internally Displaced Persons, IDPs thrown up by the Boko Haram insurgency in the North East. To us, this is almost at the same level of the charges against Dasuki over the arms deal scam in terms of gravity if they are proven to be true.”

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“Even the holes the President was reported to have picked in the reasons for demanding for the SGF's resignation does not hold water given that Babachir never honoured the invitation to from the Senate Committee on the Humanitarian Crisis in the North East to clear explain his role in the IDP funds scam in the first place.”

“It is extremely dangerous and scary to have an element with such baggage occupying the office of the Secretary General to Federation. The situation in the IDP camps have been so terrible, traumatic and unbelievably inhuman that as a country, we must treat anyone that has been found to be linked to the illegalities that have further exacerbated the sufferings of the IDPs in manner that will quickly remove them from public office with the application of necessary punitive. It is disheartening to read a UN recent report which indicated that those in the IDP camps feed only once in a daily stemming from sharp practices perpetrated by officials who diverted funds and materials meant for IDPs.”

Babachir, who oversees the Presidential Initiative for the North East is being accused of owning one of the firms that contracts for the rehabilitation of the North East were awarded to. He was alleged to have resigned as a director with the firm after he became SGF and after the contracts had been executed.

Speaking on Magu, Adeniran said, “it is no gainsaying that Magu has adequately demonstrated the necessary qualities to carry the anti-corruption war to the door-steps of even the 'untouchables' in and out of power. He knew he was going to be screened by the Senate but he didn't get intimidated or daunted in all the cases being prosecuted by the EFCC under him, including the ones involving the Senate President, his wife and many ex-governors who are serving Senators! This is a body he was fully aware he was going to play decisive and crucial roles through its lawful and constitutional oversight functions in terms of the operations of the EFCC and his confirmation as substantive Chairman of the commission.”

“In the face of all this background, what he has only demonstrated is doggedness, courage and commitment in doing his job so far without any sign of cowardice and without caring whose ox is gored. That fact the Department State Security, DSS came up with two conflicting reports betrayed the poorly planned mischief of the incurably corrupt in the senate. Why would the DSS submit the so-called damning report to the Senate, rather than begin where they should have begun, the Executive?”

“We therefore call for the immediate confirmation of Magu as substantive chairman of EFCC given that the allegations against him are apparently unfounded, trumped-up and designed to break the speed and momentum of the anti-corruption drive. If that happens, the whole anti-graft war drive goes back to square one which will be a tragedy.”

“As for Babachir, we call for his resignation for the sake of Mr. President himself and his acclaimed anti-corruption stance on hand and on the credibility of the whole anti-corruption drive of his government. Babachir should go and clear his name; he should face the Senate Committee to answer questions as bordering on the allegations against him as required by law. The EFCC and the other relevant agencies should also carry out throughout investigations on the allegations and if grounds are established necessitating prosecution, the SGF must be prosecuted.”

In concluding, Adeniran posited “it is time to use discretion at the level of the Executive and Legislative arms government in the interest of the country itself beyond narrow interests. The President however is saddled with the task demonstrating statecraft in acting given the seemingly confusing situation, for the buck finally stops on his desk! We believe Magu's confirmation and Babachir's resignation is the way forward given the existing background.”

will us back in the face.”

“However, the fundamental issue is what we as a people have to do to halt this kind of negative progression in our country for very obvious reasons. With the security and well-being of the people having been relegated in the prioritizations of government for a long time, and corruption still pervading the institutions and agencies, with the social condition that has thrown up this scenario remaining intact; a society like ours inadvertently would grapple with dangers of this sort.”

“Consequently, the country wholesomely, is kept under a perpetual siege by bloodletting groups (including amorphous groups), individuals, politicians and state actors basically to sustain a system that tenaciously intend to keep its' grip of the socio-political and economic direction of the country for their selfish interests.”

“This is why we must not look at the recent incident in isolation in reacting and taking decisive action. Thus, if the government is going to draw profound lessons and make use of them in reacting to the 661 rifles importation, it must recognize that incidences like this happen where the State has failed in guaranteeing the protection of lives and property.” Adeniran averred

“The borders of country with security consciousness are very well monitored to control and nip in the bud incidences like this. The porosity of any country's border determines what can get in or out of such country. It is time that the corrupt elements in the State agencies, establishments, Services etc are weeded out because they abet and even help contrive the illegalities that takes place at our borders to a very large extent.”

“The present case must be handled in manner that will on the long run discourage arms trafficking in the country. This requires ensuring that proper investigations are carried out and diligent prosecutions are done to achieve punitive which will serve as deterrent to others. This can only happen if corruption and lack of openness does not get involved in the processes. This will demonstrate the self-avowed readiness of government to combat corruption and provisioning of good governance which will be in the interest of the vast majority where society will be rid of the subsisting social conditions and relations.

“Nigerians from all walks of life must get involved in pressuring the government to ensure that the present case is not swept 'under the carpets' with its processes shrouded in secrecy. All the suspects, their sponsors and officials of NCS involved must be fished out for prosecution. The culpable ones must be 'scape-goated' to serve as examples to other potential criminal elements.”

“Also, the NCS and the other enforcement agencies and services must be adequately equipped to confront the challenges of checkmating the heartless criminals that specializes in so-called businesses that lead to affordable loss of lives and property. The borders must be equipped with necessary gadgets that will enhance easy revelation of the cunning ways of merchants of death bringing their merchandise of deaths into the country. The holes of corruption in the public services must be plugged to avoid future incidences of this nature.”

“This is how we can avoid or abate the negative progression represented in illegal arms trafficking, corruption and mis-governance to guarantee the security of lives and property on the long run in our country.”