



# INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF BIAFRA

## Submission by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) on the Concluding Observations adopted by the Human Rights Committee on Nigeria in the absence of its second periodic report

1. This submission relates specifically to paragraphs 28 and 29 of the Committee's Concluding Observations:

### *Intercommunal and inter-ethnic violence*

28. The Committee is concerned about the long-standing conflict between nomadic cattle herders, in particular the Fulani herders and associated militia, and farmers, notably in the Middle Belt region, which has led to thousands of deaths and displaced persons. The Committee is also concerned about allegations of excessive use of force by the Nigerian air force, including firing rockets at villages in order to counter spiralling communal violence. The Committee regrets the lack of information about specific measures taken by the State party to ensure safety and security in the region; about the outcomes of investigations; and the provision of victims with the infrastructure for safe shelters (arts. 6, 7, 9 and 14).

29. The State party should strengthen its efforts to: (a) ensure safety and security in the region, including through providing safe shelters, especially for women and children; and (b) ensure that all attacks and acts of inter-ethnic violence and allegations of excessive use of force by governmental actors are investigated, those responsible are brought to justice and victims granted full reparations.

2. In its 2018 Report on Preliminary Examination Activities, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court stated that it was reviewing information to determine whether a reasonable basis exists to believe crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court have been committed in the context of Fulani herdsman violence in the North Central and North East geographical areas of Nigeria.<sup>1</sup> The conduct of herdsman, including killing and sexual and gender-based violence, has been particularly pronounced in the South East geographical area of Nigeria. Crimes perpetrated by the Fulani herdsman in this region, with impunity, are aimed at the forcible transfer of the Igbo population from Biafraland. These crimes are fostered and encouraged by the Nigerian government's creation of a climate of impunity for committed against this civilian population.<sup>2</sup>
3. There is extensive evidence of Fulani attacks on the Igbo people of South-East Nigeria, committed with impunity, and aimed at the forcible transfer of population in the context of a widespread and systematic attack on the civilian population. In addition, we are submitting the following evidence that indicates that the communal violence

<sup>1</sup> OTP, Report on Preliminary Examination Activities (2018), paras. 231-232.

<sup>2</sup> Amnesty International, 'Harvest of Death: Three Years of Bloody Clashes between Farmers and Herders in Nigeria', 17 December 2018, pp. 41, available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/AFR4495032018ENGLISH.PDF>



and consequent human rights violations have been continuing since July 2019 when the Human Rights Committee examined Nigeria's report and the adoption of its Concluding Observations in August of the same year.

4. Of particular concern is that there is evidence of attempts to transfer Covid-19 affected population from the North to the South. On 5 May 2020 IPOB revealed that "Arewa North dominated by Fulani have been secretly sending Coronavirus patients in the name of sending out their Almajiri group to Enugu state since the lockdown started". This is despite that the Almajiris have no prior connection to Enugu and appears to be an effort to kill and thus to reduce the Igbo population in Biafraland.<sup>3</sup> It has been separately alleged that the Almajiris are being transported from North to South (Biafraland) in trucks owned and operated by Dangote Industries Ltd, although the company denies involvement at the corporate level.<sup>4</sup>
5. On the same day, buses carrying roughly 100 Almajiris attempted entry into Abia state. The Abia State Government blocked their entry.<sup>5</sup>
6. On 7 May 2020 roughly 300 Almajiris on nine buses were discovered entering Enugu State. The Enugu State government blocked their entry.<sup>6</sup> On the same day, the Cross River State government discovered "five truckloads of almajirai and other passengers from the North" attempting entry into State.<sup>7</sup>
7. Throughout May 2020 there were numerous incidents of shootings, deaths and kidnappings as a result of communal violence.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> IPOB, 'Press Release: IPOB Condemns The Dispatch of Coronavirus Infested Almajiri To Biafra Land', 5 May 2020, available at: <http://www.ipob.org/2020/05/press-release-ipob-condemns-dispatch-of.html>.

<sup>4</sup> Today, 'Aliko Dangote writes Ohanaeze, denies transporting Almajiris to southern Nigeria', 28 May 2020, available at: <https://www.today.ng/news/nigeria/aliko-dangote-writes-ohanaeze-denies-transporting-almajiris-southern-nigeria-300669>.

<sup>5</sup> *The Guardian*, 'South East, South South clamp down on almajirai relocating from North', 8 May 2020, available at: <https://guardian.ng/news/south-east-south-south-clamp-down-on-almajirai-relocating-from-north/>. See also, *Vanguard*, 'Anxiety in Abia, as security agents intercept truckload of Almajiris from North', 6 May 2020, available at: <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/05/anxiety-in-abia-as-security-intercept-truckload-of-almajiris-from-north/>.

<sup>6</sup> *The Guardian*, 'South East, South South clamp down on almajirai relocating from North', 8 May 2020, available at: <https://guardian.ng/news/south-east-south-south-clamp-down-on-almajirai-relocating-from-north/>.

<sup>7</sup> *The Guardian*, 'South East, South South clamp down on almajirai relocating from North', 8 May 2020, available at: <https://guardian.ng/news/south-east-south-south-clamp-down-on-almajirai-relocating-from-north/>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/blog/nigeria-security-tracker-weekly-update-may-9-15>;  
<https://www.cfr.org/blog/nigeria-security-tracker-weekly-update-may-16-22>



8. On 6 May, Fulani herdsmen kidnapped an unidentified woman and her daughter in Delta State, then shot and killed two members of their search party. *The Vanguard* reported:<sup>9</sup>

A dependable source in the community told newsmen that the vigilante group mobilized into the forest in search of the kidnapped woman and her daughter, adding that the Fulani herdsmen on sighting the vigilante men alighting from their vehicle opened fire on them.

The source who pleaded anonymity lamented that the vigilante leader, simply identified as Emeka and one of his members were killed on the spot by the daring Fulani herdsmen while one other member of the group sustained serious bullets injuries on his legs.

9. Three people were shot, feared dead, in Biase, Cross River, on 12 May.<sup>10</sup>

10. In the early hours of 16 May 2020, a woman, Mrs Muna Ezeudu, was abducted by gunmen suspected of being Fulani herdsmen. She was taken from her home in Eziam Nike, Enugu East Local Government Area.<sup>11</sup> *Punch* reported:<sup>12</sup>

A relation of Ezeudu, Mrs Nwanneka Agbo, told *Sunday PUNCH* that Ezeudu was kidnapped at her residence in Eziam Nike, Enugu East Local Government Area of the state in the early hours of Saturday.

Agbo claimed that the kidnapers were Fulani herdsmen.

She said, “My sister sent us a text message that read, ‘Herdsmen kidnapped us and kept us at Eziam Nike Forest Hills.’”

Our correspondent learnt that Ezeudu’s abduction happened barely a week after another woman, one Mrs Eneh from Eziam Nike community, was kidnapped and released after parting with some money as a ransom.

A security source said Eziam Nike had become a hotbed of kidnapping in the state recently.

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<sup>9</sup> *Vanguard*, ‘Tension in Delta as suspected Fulani herdsmen kill two vigilante men, 7 May 2020, available at: <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2020/05/tension-in-delta-as-suspected-fulani-herdsmen-kill-two-vigilante-men/>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.evernote.com/shard/s386/client/snv?noteGuid=8894464a-19f6-496c-8789-beaa29644144&noteKey=0516c9c4a397306e&sn=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.evernote.com%2Fshard%2Fs386%2Fsh%2F8894464a-19f6-496c-8789-beaa29644144%2F0516c9c4a397306e&title=3%2Bfeared%2Bdead%2Bin%2Brenewed%2Bcommunal%2Bclash%2Bin%2BCross%2BRiver>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.evernote.com/1/AYKrlXEdTQ1NPYYGVMMefbAjyaW5Y1zNf6w>

<sup>12</sup> *Punch*, ‘Suspected Fulani herdsmen kidnap Enugu woman’, 17 May 2020, available at: <https://punchng.com/suspected-fulani-herdsmen-kidnap-enugu-woman/>.



*Punch* added:<sup>13</sup>

“The Abakpa Divisional Police Officer, SP Azubuike Fred, led a squad to track the kidnappers at their hideout,” the source said.

Efforts to get the reaction of the state Police Public Relations Officer, ASP Daniel Ndukwe, failed as he neither picked calls nor replied to the text message sent to his phone.

11. Fifteen people were killed in Biase, Cross River, on 19 May.<sup>14</sup> The state Police Command Public Relations Officer, Irene Ugbo, claimed no persons had been killed.<sup>15</sup>
12. Two deaths, 13 years old boy, Izuchukwu Promise of Ezza Umuhuali and a 50 years old man, Emeka Nwannaji, of Umuhuali, in Ishielu, Ebonyi, occurred on 20 May.<sup>16</sup>
13. Four persons were kidnapped by suspected Fulani herdsmen on the Lagos-Asaba Road in Boji-Boji Owa community, Ika North East Local Government Area, Delta, on 29 May.<sup>17</sup> *Punch* reported:<sup>18</sup>

A source, who confided in our correspondent, said, “They were four persons checking a parcel of land when they were kidnapped by some bandits who have been terrorising the area.

“About five herdsmen with sophisticated weapons kidnapped them. The hoodlums were shooting continuously to scare people living in the area.”

The Police Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP Onome Onovwakpoyeya, confirmed the incident, adding that it was reported late to the police.

She said, “Yes, four persons were kidnapped in Ika North-East but they reported the matter late, so officers couldn’t do anything on Friday night. Our men have started combing the bush to rescue the victims”

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<sup>13</sup> *Punch*, ‘Suspected Fulani herdsmen kidnap Enugu woman’, 17 May 2020, available at: <https://punchng.com/suspected-fulani-herdsmen-kidnap-enugu-woman/>.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.cfr.org/blog/nigeria-security-tracker-weekly-update-may-16-22;>

<https://www.evernote.com/l/AYIgIKm5bstDcqKxdSJkiMxoP3hiwtTbk20>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.evernote.com/l/AYIgIKm5bstDcqKxdSJkiMxoP3hiwtTbk20>

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.evernote.com/l/AYLv0txq2BtJkZNiwGwQ\\_p0TW1mRWoa-p0g](https://www.evernote.com/l/AYLv0txq2BtJkZNiwGwQ_p0TW1mRWoa-p0g)

<sup>17</sup> [https://www.evernote.com/l/AYLSiA1C38JOWJdhpXXI0fb\\_s2jw9xwSOk](https://www.evernote.com/l/AYLSiA1C38JOWJdhpXXI0fb_s2jw9xwSOk)

<sup>18</sup> *Punch*, ‘Four abducted in Delta, three Niger kidnappers arrested’, 31 May 2019, available at: <https://punchng.com/four-abducted-in-delta-three-niger-kidnappers-arrested/>.



14. On 30 August 2019, the NSF destroyed nine family homes in Aba, forcibly displacing over 500 men, women and children.<sup>19</sup> Intersociety described:<sup>20</sup>

Available statistics showed that nine residential houses were burnt or razed by the Nigeria Police on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019 in Ndiegoro suburban of Aba-during which multiple dozens were arrested, detained, tortured and extorted. Over 500 citizens including infants and their mothers were rendered homeless. Till date, no senior police officers or culpable junior police officers have been held to account.

15. On 9 August 2019, Fulani herdsmen, with the acquiescence of the Nigerian government, shot in the neck and murdered Friday Etor in Akwa Ibom State. They critically injured a second person with a gunshot to the leg. *Punch* reported that “[a] community source which pleaded not to be mentioned said the herdsmen had arrived the community a week ago with a large herd, causing destruction to farm crops in the area”.<sup>21</sup>
16. The Nigerian authorities have failed to bring those responsible to justice and to ensure reparations are paid to the victims and their families. We therefore urge the Human Rights Committee to reiterate its call on the Nigerian authorities to ‘(a) ensure safety and security in the region, including through providing safe shelters, especially for women and children; and (b) ensure that all attacks and acts of inter-ethnic violence and allegations of excessive use of force by governmental actors are investigated, those responsible are brought to justice and victims granted full reparations’.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Nigerian Voice*, ‘Open Letter To Nigerian Army, Defense Headquarters & Nigeria Police Force’, 30 October 2019, available at: <https://www.thenigerianvoice.com/news/282638/open-letter-to-nigerian-army-defense-headquarters-nigeria.html>.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *Punch*, ‘Herdsmen kill one, injure another in Akwa Ibom’, 9 August 2019, available at: <https://punchng.com/herdsmen-kill-one-injure-another-in-akwa-ibom/>.

