

## THE ABUJA SIT-OUT: A UNANIMOUS QUEST FOR JUSTICE!

Written by freezak

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In the name of Allah who states &quot;O Dawood! Surely We have made you a ruler in the land; so judge between men with justice and do not follow desire, lest it shall lead you astray from the path of Allah; (as for) who go astray from the path of Allah, they shall surely have severe punishment because they forgot the day of reckoning&quot; Q38:26

Peace and blessings of Allah be upon His noble servant, our master Muhammad and his purified progeny.

The piece for this week is on the Abuja sit-out organised by the Concerned Nigerians under the leadership of Deji Adeyanju which has entered its second month. The interesting thing about the Unity Fountain programme is the unity it signifies. Regardless of tribal, religious and geographical differences, Nigerians unanimously converge in the fountain in quest of justice to their oppressed fellows. The programme feature citizens from various walks of life concerned with the unity and progress of the nation using their constitutional right to express their views, and to draw the attention of those in authority on the repercussion of the tyranny meted against the Islamic Movement especially in acclaimed democratic setting mandated to respond to the needs and yearnings of the citizenry. No doubt the unanimous sympathy notwithstanding humanitarian nature owes a lot to the responsible and insightful leadership of the Shaikh widely known and hailed in the unity, peaceful coexistence and ethno-religious tolerance of Nigeria. We have cited several examples to the public indifferent media.

Since the unfortunate massacre of a thousand disciples of Shaikh el-Zakzaky at several points in Zaria in 2015 where he and his wife sustained many gunshot injuries, they were detained almost incommunicado by the DSS. The demands of the Islamic Movement apparently remain unchanged: unconditional release of the Shaikh, his wife and other detainees, handing over the bodies of the slaughtered and mass graved to the Movement for proper Islamic burial, compensation for the destructions made and of course the need to bring the mass murderers to book. Rallies and peaceful protests were incessantly organised by the Movement and its well wishers across the world. Even though the calls fall flat to the ears of intended authorities, but no matter how long hope is never lost in the struggle for justice.

Despite the contemptuous nature of the government, the Movement is optimistic on the undecided case (issues) with the Federal High Court, Kaduna and the International Criminal Court ICC. The dismay is consequent to the total disregard to the Justice Kolawale Abuja Court 6 verdict to release the ailing Shaikh and his wife unconditionally, provide a befitting house and security for them with a compensation of fifty million Naira. The sit-out was initiated on the deterioration of the Shaikh's untreated health leading to stroke which accelerated the effort of those looking for justice across the world to reecho the need for his release on medical ground. In the light of the unfortunate situation then, his younger brother Sayyid Badamasi Yaquob spoke to local and international media expressing dismay on the nonchalant attitude of the authorities. He requested the government to allow the family to take the Shaikh to abroad for urgent medical attention, saying that even in the detention, he caters for his needs including fuelling the generator. Beside several correspondences to presidency by his lawyers, the family and associates within and outside the country have written to authorities in the last two years,

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but no any positive response. To many concerned Nigerians, Shaikh el-Zakzaky's situation is very sensitive to the country's security and socio-economic well being that government should not be handled badly.

Among other questions Nigerians ask, on what ground was the Shaikh initially arrested? In whose interest is the detention of the elderly and ailing Shaikh and his wife? What is the government stand on the Federal High Court verdict? Why shouldn't government respond to need of millions of Nigerians on the need to take him abroad for medication? And to what extent should the detention continue? What is the stand of the government on the over one thousand Nigerians killed in the Zaria pogrom and related incidences? Apparently, the indifference on the side of the government cannot help the country at all. Justice is the key to the much needed peace and stability of our dear nation. Justice delay is justice denial and injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.

We should not forget that, democracy as the rule of the majority must ensure justice and protect the minority on whatever ground. However, the Nigeria's democratic history was characterized by rigging, use of hooligans and other sorts of corrupt practices. That was why elections had not been free, fair and credible for decades. For this, most responsible people decided not to be party to such irresponsible and embarrassing processes. The number of recorded voters had been very supportive to this assertion. Analytically, in most cases you find no political will from the candidates just like the electorates who do not have the awareness and courage to appraise those elected to various offices based on their campaign promises. This was why masses were always exploited with token amount or materials during electoral process. As such the politicians would always find their ways to mantle of leadership by all means possible and never cared about the wishes of the electorates. In fact most of them would only meet the electorates at the eve of their tenure for re-election or imposition! In contrast, we envisage a situation where both candidates and electorates could stand their task and obligation regarding the political process. This is what we witness where people are more enlightened.

It is unfortunate that most politicians consider leadership a privilege. One could easily notice such people misusing the opportunity by amassing wealth for their personal gains, relations and associates forgetting the masses that mandated them to such political positions. It is very clear that the essence of governance is to ensure justice and improve socio-economic well being of the society. The principal sectors of our national life are generally in very difficult situation. Agriculture, Security, power, education, health, aviation, water and petroleum resources among others. The most disheartening and disturbing problem is corruption which is the root cause of all evils in the country. Corruption is relative, spatial and temporal covering stealing, embezzlement, misappropriation, vandalism and money laundering among others. This predicament has been on the increase despite various agencies established to tackle it.

From the Islamic point of view, man is originally on trial, trial in the sense that he was created to serve as Allah's vicegerent on earth. In other words to serve Allah and live in peace and love according to His commands. So we are all on trial; the leader, the led, the rich, the poor and everybody! Therefore Allah has expectation on man irrespective of his social status just as the masses have their expectation on the leaders and all are accountable to Allah, the Most High. Politicians get access to mantle of leadership on the platform of political parties which have their manifestos. The constitution on the other hand has specified terms of reference and powers for political office holders with a view to serving the people efficiently. During political campaigns and rallies, candidates promise to fulfill the yearnings of the electorates in a multifaceted

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dimension which they mostly ignore after election. Imperatively, leaders should understand and play the right role as custodians of the people. As such, they should work around the clock to the satisfaction of the populace.

Imam Ali (As), the Commander of the faithful has said; I have accepted the task of government because Allah, Exalted and Almighty, has exacted from the scholars of Islam a pledge not to sit silent and idle in the face of gluttony and plundering of the oppressors on one hand and the hunger and deprivation of the oppressed on the other&quot;

An excerpt from the compendium of thirteen speeches of Imam Khomeini delivered at Najaf in 1970 reads; &quot;The scholars of Islam have a duty to struggle against all attempts by oppressors to establish a monopoly over the sources of wealth or to make illicit use of them. They must not allow the masses to remain hungry and deprived while plundering oppressors usurp the sources of wealth and live in opulence&quot;. He also said &quot;A clergyman should be such that when the people see him, they should remember the messenger of Allah (S). You have accepted this heavy responsibility and it is you that should guide this people to the end&quot;. The well known concept of Wilayatul faqih -governance of the jurist- was built on this basis.

Shaikh el-Zakzaky has been rightly on such scholars track enduring oppression for decades. It is imperative to commend all those putting hands for justice especially the Concerned Nigerians Group. That was the rationale behind all prophetic mission. Allah states &quot;Verily, We sent Our Messengers with manifest signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance that people may act with justice .....&quot; Q2:247. In an oft repeated quote, Shaikh Usman Bn Fodio said &quot;a kingdom can endure with unbelief, but it cannot endure with injustice.

Wassalamu alaikum!



Concerned Nigerians group leads protest to National Assembly over illegal detention of IMN leader, Sheikh Zakzaky on 21 of Feb 2018