



“Surely we belong to Allah and to Him we shall surely return!” Today we mark the 2000 days of Sheikh Ibraheem Yaqoub Zakzaky, the leader of Islamic Movement in Nigeria, in illegal detention. We opened our article with this verse of the holy Quran because the Messenger of Allah commanded believers to recite it whenever affliction befell them or remember it.

And indeed the aggression suffered by our leader Sheikh Zakzaky in the hands of this regime is among the worst affliction that has happened to this country, and we are living witnesses to its disastrous effect since the assumption of power by Buhari regime.

Since the Zaria genocide of December, 2015 committed by the Nigerian Army, where 1000+ were massacred, properties worth millions of Naira destroyed, with hundreds seriously injured, Kaduna state government of Elrufai and the federal government of Buhari took to the media instead of the courts, accusing Sheikh Zakzaky and the Islamic Movement in Nigeria of frivolous charges, all in a bid to sway the public opinion to their side in justifying the unjustifiable brutal attack on the Islamic Movement.

However 2000 days since the massacre in Zaria, all what they were falsely accusing Sheikh Zakzaky of committing are busy being perpetrated by other groups in different parts of the country unchallenged by Buhari regime. In the aftermath of the genocide in Zaria, the government was busy trumpeting the false accusation that Gen. Buratai’s convoy was blocked from passing in the media. But today we see the real road blockers, killing and maiming innocent citizens in Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, North central, not to talk of the Northeast

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Written by freezak

Thursday, 03 June 2021 14:17 -

and the government seemingly unable to apprehend and prosecute them! But why should only Sheikh Zakzaky be singled out with this false accusation that is baseless?

Not only that, the regime and its cohorts were busy at the slightest opportunity accusing our leader and members of the Islamic Movement of creating another government inside a government, just to justify their wanton killings and destruction in Zaria. Not long after, we are now living witnesses to many declared governments in virtually all the six geopolitical zones of the country. We ask, why is Sheikh Zakzaky singled out for such a spurious charge? If indeed Buhari regime is seriously offended by 'a government in government', it knows where to find them in the Southeast, and Northwest in particular, but not from Sheikh Zakzaky and the Islamic Movement.

This regime, notorious for false propaganda, went to town claiming that Sheikh Zakzaky and the Islamic Movement are in possession of dangerous arms. To date none were found, but those in possession of sophisticated weapons are holding the nation ransom in various parts of the country, with the government not having the stomach to fight them – the bandits ravaging the North and the separatists groups pillaging the South. Hence there is no justification in keeping Sheikh Zakzaky in detention on this frivolous accusation.

To, cap it all, the USA has declared Sheikh Zakzaky as a political prisoner in Nigeria in its latest human rights report on the country. What this means is that the United States has come to the conclusion that Sheikh Zakzaky is not in detention for any criminal offense, but because of his religious beliefs. If of all countries America will make such a proclamation, it must have seen the brutal attempt to annihilate the Sheikh and the Islamic Movement by this regime.

Hence we are calling on the public to join us enmasse in demanding justice for Sheikh Zakzaky and other victims of Zaria genocide by the Nigerian Army in Zaria without any hesitation. Time has proven to all and sundry that our leader is not a killer, not a bandit, not a separatist, but a bridge builder to peace and harmony in the country. Refusal to identify with this struggle is akin to endorsing the brutal attack against the Islamic Movement, which has drawn the wrath of Allah against the nation, leaving the country in turmoil, economic downturn and sliding fast into anarchy.

For the oppressive government of this country, we reiterate our call to it to immediately release our leader, Sheikh Zakzaky unconditionally, including all those in detention in their various detention centres. For how long will the government keep on incarcerating the most oppressed

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citizen who has today clocked 2000 painful days in detention? Free him now, hopefully Allah will stop the present calamities befalling the country.

SIGNED

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03/06/2021