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Lagos, Nigeria

NIGERIAN SLUM / INFORMAL SETTLEMENT FEDERATION

THE NIGERIAN SLUM / INFORMAL SETTLEMENT FEDERATION STANDS IN SOLIDARITY WITH EVICTEES TO DEMAND JUSTICE FOR OTODO GBAME AND CALL ON THE LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE IMMEDIATE RESETTLEMENT IN LINE WITH COURT ORDERS & ITS OWN PROMISES TO EVICTEES

Today, the Nigerian Slum / Informal Settlement Federation stands in solidarity with the over 30,000 people who were violently evicted from Otodo Gbame in a state-led land grab that commenced on 9 November 2016 and continued in violation of court orders.

As we mark one year from the start of the forced eviction, tens of thousands of evictees are homeless and living in desperate poverty, while their land is being used for luxury real estate projects, including Imperial International Business City and Periwinkle Residences.

Despite its promises to the evictees and a court order requiring resettlement of evictees, the Lagos State Government is yet to provide any relief or resettlement. Since initial promises in April 2017, it has ignored repeated communications from evictees. We therefore join with the Otodo Gbame evictees in calling for justice and an end to impunity.

The forced evictions in Otodo Gbame took place from November 2016 to April 2017 in blatant disregard of a court order restraining the Government from evicting the community and despite widespread condemnation from the community members, civil society organisations, concerned citizens, and the international community. In a show of great impunity, the Government withdrew from court-ordered mediation and proceeded to demolish the community and chase all residents off the land in March-April 2017.

At least 11 community residents drowned during the evictions and many were shot, including Elijah Avonda and Daniel Aya, who were killed on 8 and 9 April 2017, respectively. Elijah was a 42-year-old fisherman who left behind two wives and ten children. Daniel Aya was a young man in his twenties who was helping to salvage his family's belongings when he was shot in the neck by police with the State Task Force. Another young man, Monday Idowu, was shot in the chest but survived thanks to the courage of community members who helped take him by boat to get emergency treatment.

The tens of thousands of Lagosians who managed to survive the Government's actions in this case have been suffering the many negative impacts of forced evictions, including homelessness, loss of livelihoods, family separation, physical and mental illness, interruption of education, and death. However, during and since the evictions, the people of Otodo Gbame have been unrelenting in their struggle for human dignity and justice.



agbajowo la fin soya
pili pili toloto mi je po godo tolonayo
unity is our strength



On 21 June 2017, Justice S.A. Onigbanjo of the Lagos State High Court handed down a landmark judgment in favour of the fundamental human rights of the waterfront residents of Lagos State, including those evicted from Otodo Gbame. **The judgment declared evictions without resettlement to be unconstitutional, in violation of the prohibition on cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and the right to dignity.** The court ordered the State Government to consult with and resettle all evictees, while restraining the State Government from any further evictions of the Lagos waterfront communities.

Moreover, in April 2017 after the final eviction of Otodo Gbame, the Lagos State Government promised to provide relief and resettlement to evictees. Following this promise and on request of the Government, the community went to great effort to trace evictees to various host communities across Lagos and compile a list, which was duly submitted to the State Government for resettlement and relief. Up to date, however, the Government has not made good on its promises or taken steps to obey the court orders and has rather ignored all communications from evictees and their legal representatives.

In light of the failure of the Government to uphold our fundamental rights, we the urban poor organised as the Nigerian Slum / Informal Settlement Federation today join the people of Otodo Gbame to demand the following from our elected government:

1. An immediate moratorium on demolitions in Lagos State and engagement with us, the urban poor, to find workable alternatives to evictions;
2. Full and adequate compensation of all affected by the forced eviction of Otodo Gbame;
3. Resettlement of evictees to their land in Otodo Gbame; and
4. Justice for the families of Elijah Avonda and Daniel Aya.

SIGNED: NIGERIAN SLUM/INFORMAL SETTLEMENT FEDERATION, LAGOS CHAPTER

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ABOUT US: *The Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation is a movement of the urban poor for our dignity and development, made up of community savings groups in over 70 slums and informal settlements here in Lagos – and growing also in other Nigerian cities. In addition to community-led economic empowerment through our savings groups, we work with our member communities to undertake citywide slum profiling, mapping, and enumeration to understand our development challenges and opportunities to feed into our collective advocacy for a better urban future. We are affiliated with Slum Dwellers International, a global network of slumdwellers' federations in 33 countries around the world.*