

WELFARE SPEECH BY BARRISTER EMEKA EMEKESIRI, CHAIRMAN OF MOBIN, ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE EBONYI STATE CHAPTER OF THE MOVEMENT OF BIAFRANS IN NIGERIA (MOBIN) ON 8TH APRIL 2018.

(SPEECH DELIVERED BY MRS EBERECHUKWU ANIGBOGU, DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF MOBIN ON BEHALF OF THE CHAIRMAN)

His Excellency, the Governor of Ebonyi State
All Royal Fathers in Ebonyi State
All Community Leaders in Ebonyi State
All Village Heads in Ebonyi State
All Families in Ebonyi State
All Members of Movement of Biafrans in Nigeria (MOBIN), Ebonyi State Chapter
Ladies and Gentlemen

We are grateful to the Government of Ebonyi State and its people for the warm reception accorded to us. We have gathered today for the inauguration of the Ebonyi State Chapter of the Movement of Biafrans in Nigeria (MOBIN). Our name defines who we are. We are Biafrans living in Nigeria. We are Nigerians by citizenship but Biafrans by indigenous identity. To further understand who we are, it is necessary to disclose that we are the political and civil rights movement of the Biafrans who are the claimants in Suit No FHC/OW/CS/192/2013 in the Federal High Court of Nigeria seeking to exercise our right to self-determination by legal methodology consisting of judicial, political and diplomatic processes.

The new agitation for independence by the Biafrans began in 1999. However, the pioneers of the struggle made some mistakes when they said they were not Nigerians and would not participate in the Nigerian politics and census. Thus, in 2006, the pioneers of the struggle stopped the Biafrans from being enumerated in the national census which resulted in the South East geopolitical zone becoming the minority zone in the Nigerian demographic record today. It was observed that the pioneers were often in confrontations with the Nigerian Authorities, the police and the military, leading to loss of lives. It was obvious that both the Nigerian Authorities and the pioneer Biafran agitators appeared to lack some knowledge about self-determination struggle by people living in the country. They could not understand the difference between nationality and indigenous identity of persons. While the Biafran agitators were vehemently opposed to participation in the Nigerian politics and abhorred everything called "Nigerian", the Nigerian Authorities also vehemently opposed and abhorred everything called "Biafran" as though it was a crime to be called a Biafran. Both sides were in error. A person does not lose his indigenous identity by becoming a citizen of a sovereign country. MOBIN has come to proffer permanent solutions to the national problems and create peace and stability. The Biafrans are Nigerians by citizenship until they gain independence from Nigeria just as the Scottish people who

are now struggling for independence are still British citizens until they gain independence from Britain.

MOBIN is not a political party but a political movement imparting political education to the masses. You can describe it as a political watchman or pressure group. You can describe MOBIN as a civil rights movement. You can describe MOBIN as a vehicle for political education and enlightenment. In the Suit No FHC/OW/CS/192/2013 in the Federal High Court of Nigeria between Biafra and Nigeria in which we sued in a representative capacity by our human rights organization called Bilie Human Rights Initiative, we made it clear that it is not a crime to be called a Biafran by indigenous identity. We have made the Nigerian Government to understand that what the Biafrans lost after the war was their sovereignty and not their indigenous identity as a people. If Nigeria had annihilated Biafra as Rome annihilated Carthage during the Punic wars, there would not have been any remnants of the Biafrans today seeking to exercise their right to self-determination. Since the remnants of the Biafrans survived the war, they are protected under both national and international law to rise up again and regain their sovereignty. Self-determination is our fundamental right guaranteed by law. We the Biafrans living in Nigeria have engaged the Federal Government of Nigeria in a legal battle because we believe in the right of self-determination as enshrined in Article 20 Cap 10 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990 as follows:

Article 20:

1. All peoples shall have the right to existence. They shall have the unquestionable and inalienable right to self-determination. They shall freely determine their political status and shall pursue their economic and social development according to the policy they have freely chosen.
2. Colonized or oppressed peoples shall have the right to free themselves from the bonds of domination by resorting to any means recognized by the international community.

This is the Nigerian law for freedom fighters by legal methodology. We are the people colonised and oppressed in our own land. We are oppressed by the politicians who have been ruling over us. We want to free ourselves from their bondage. They are imposed on us by our political opponents to whom they render accounts as their godfathers in the Nigerian politics. We heard about how a sitting governor imposed on Anambra people was abducted on orders from Abuja because he refused to share the State money with his political godfather. Those who installed him therefore turned against him and said, *"Hey, you are too stubborn. After all, you did not win the election but we rigged you into the Anambra State house and made you the Governor"*. They are shameless politicians. Enough is enough. Their cup is full.

We are the Indigenous Peoples of the lands and have come to take over the government of our lands by judicial, political and diplomatic processes. The masses are suffering in agony whether in the East, West or North. All the indigenous peoples of the lands have been enslaved by these wicked politicians. We want to be free and we must be free whether the devils like it or not. It is either freedom within Nigeria or freedom outside Nigeria. The full title of the Nigerian law for freedom fighters is the African Charter on Human and People's Rights (Ratification and Enforcement) Act, Cap 10, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990. It is an international law domesticated in Nigeria which by virtue of the authority of the Court of Appeal in the case of *IGP v ANPP (2007) 18 NWLR (Pt. 1066) 457* supersedes the Nigerian Constitution. For many years the Biafran agitators were groping in dark and hiding from the Nigerian Authorities but MOBIN does not hide from anybody because our approach is anchored upon the rule of law.

As far as the Biafran Independence Struggle is concerned, the eyes of the world are now upon MOBIN because we have adopted the strategies recognised under the Nigerian law and international law. We are the Biafrans in politics and diplomacy. We participated in the Anambra State Election and ensured that the candidate who was the people's choice was duly elected. The Anambra Election was held successfully despite the radio propaganda and calls by some misguided and fanatical Biafran agitators full of zeal without knowledge asking their followers to boycott all elections and threatening to kill anybody who dared to vote. It is quite unfortunate that while the people of Northern Nigeria and Western Nigeria troop out to vote for the candidates of their choice, the people of the South East are told to boycott the Elections by some Radio Biafra Propagandists feeding themselves fat from the Biafran Struggle!

MOBIN believes that the Biafrans must secure and control their political space in Eastern Nigeria first and have the balance of power to negotiate with the Federal Government. Under the Nigerian law, the members of the Parliament represent their people and whatever they pass into law becomes binding. We want to start by creating Biafra within Nigeria as a Regional Government just like Scotland within Britain. Some call it RESTRUCTURING but we call it DEVOLUTION OF POWER to the Regions so that every region will govern itself, control its own resources and develop at its own pace. This is the next stage before outright independence. The people who want independence must be organized to speak with one voice. Our Regional Government in Biafraland shall pass the necessary Bills into law that will lead to our final exit from Nigeria. Referendum is a political process and not a street protest.

Politics itself is freedom fighting by the power of our votes. Our legal methodology for self-determination consists of judicial, diplomatic and political strategies. These are the means recognised by the international community under Article 20 (2) of the law cited above. For many years the Biafran agitators failed to understand the power of politics in freedom fighting. Street protests without political and diplomatic strategies are sheer foolishness. Abusing the elders of the land, insulting the

authorities, and threatening to kill those who have different political opinions cannot achieve independence for a people. MOBIN has ushered into the Nigerian politics some elements of freedom fighting for self-determination by the arts and science of politics and politicking in a civilized manner.

Today we have come to inaugurate our political freedom fighters in Ebonyi State consisting of the State Coordinator, Local Government Coordinators and Ward Coordinators. We have come to impart to Ebonyi State and its people the art of freedom fighting by politics and diplomacy. We want to train and educate the youths in politics and governance. We want to empower the people of Ebonyi State with political education. The whole country is sick and managed by expired politicians suffering from political and intellectual dementia. To have a change we must make the change. The former Prime Minister of the Great Britain described Nigeria as fantastically corrupt. To continue to recycle the old politicians infested with the same “corrupt and roguish Nigerian political mind-set” will only produce the old results of moral and political decadence. Only a mad man continues to do the same thing over and over with constant failures but hopes to get a different result. To get a different result, we must do things in a different way. The different way is the new way created by MOBIN to actualise the people’s vision for self-determination by the rule of law, politics and diplomacy.

Our vote is our power. We call on the new Executive Officers of the Ebonyi State Chapter of MOBIN to rise up to the challenge and “mobinize” all people in Ebonyi State into politics. Mobinize everybody to obtain his or her voter’s card and mobinize all people to the polling stations on the day of the elections! It does not end with voting. We must mobinize all the Biafran political activists to vote and ensure that the elections are not rigged. This is why MOBIN is called the political watchman for the Biafrans. MOBIN cannot allow any election to be rigged in Biafraland or any political stooge or errand boy to be imposed on the Biafrans by the Northern or Western political godfathers. Never again!

Thank you for your attention.

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