

The Nigerian State, Igbo genocide and the Africom

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1 INTRODUCTION¹

Most states in Africa demonstrate a glaring inability to fulfil their basic role to provide security, welfare and transformative capacities for society's developmental needs and aspirations. The tragic launch-pad that emblematises this contemporary Africa's 'age of pestilence', as I call it,² began catastrophically with the organised mass murder of the Igbo of west Africa by the Nigeria state and its myriad institutions: military, police, academia, press, religiocultural. In the period from May 29, 1966 to January 12, 1970, a total of 3.1 million Igbo people were murdered (EKWE-EKWE, 2006).

Forty-two years on, 12 million additional Africans have been murdered in the ever-expanding genocidal killing fields of the continent in Rwanda (1994), Zaïre/Democratic Republic of the Congo (variously, since the late 1990s), Darfur – west of the Sudan – (since 2004), Abyei – south of the Sudan – (ongoing) and Nuba – south of the Sudan – (ongoing) and in other killings in Liberia, Ethiopia, Congo Republic, Somalia, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Mozambique, Algeria, Libya, Kenya, Central African Republic, South Sudan, Angola, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Mali (EKWE-EKWE, 2011).

In effect, since the Igbo genocide, the state in Africa is virtually a genocide-state, which means the bane of African social existence. It is what constitutes the firestorm of the emergency that threatens the very survival of the African. It is not the "debt", "poverty", HIV/Aids/other diseases and the myriad of socioeconomics indices often reeled off in many a commentary. This state,

1 An earlier version of the paper was presented on the panel "US Africa Command and South Atlantic Security", V Enabed, fifth national conference of Brazilian Association of Defence Studies, Fortaleza, Brazil, 8 August 2011.

2 On further elaboration on this age of pestilence, see Ekwe-Ekwe (2011), especially p. 113-121.

which the European conqueror-regime (Britain, France, Portugal, Germany, Belgium, Spain) created originally in Berlin in the 1880s, cannot lead Africans to the reconstructive change they deeply yearn for after the tragic history of centuries of foreign occupation. Such a change was and never is the mission of this State but an instrument to murder, expropriate and despoil Africa by the conquest and its aftermath.³

As this paper demonstrates, the very presumptions, predilections and exigencies that encapsulate the thinking and strategic goals of the planners of the United States Africa Command, AFRICOM, are based precisely on this evaluation of the utterly unviable ethos of the contemporary African State and the palpable, widespread feeling of alienation towards it expressed by most constituent African peoples or nations. In other words, AFRICOM wishes to exploit the critically unresolved seismic crisis within the African political landscape created by the history and devastating consequences of conquest.

Tragically, this is equally the background against which an array of foreign powers and international/transnational institutions or organisations have often acted, with impunity, in African socioeconomic and political affairs and development in the past 56 years, despite this epoch of presumed restoration of African independence and sovereignty, starting with the Sudan on 1 January 1956. The flagrant 2011 Anglo-Franco-US-led NATO unrelenting aerial and naval bombardment of Libya and the French-led violent military overthrow of the government of Cote d'Ivoire earlier on in the same year, during which an estimated number of 2300 Africans were so ruthlessly murdered,⁴ underscore this staggering impunity.

Africans, *themselves*, must therefore resolve the contentious issues generated by the extant genocide-state that fuels the conflictual existence of its peoples before achieving urgently needed socioeconomic transformation. This is an imperative, internal political question, whose answer or solution is also imperatively

3 See Ekwe-Ekwe (2011), particularly chapters 6, 11 and 31.

4 Herbert Ekwe-Ekwe, *France must now leave Côte d'Ivoire*, http://re-thinkingafrica.blogspot.com/2011/05/france-must-now-leave-cote-divoire_5571.html, May 2011 (accessed 24 July 2011).

internal, definitely *not* external, howsoever the “rationalisation” is construed. Thus, Africans’ *own* strategic goal for change remains the dismantling of the architecture of alienation and subjugation posed to African existence and progress by the “Berlin state” emplaced. There is no more profoundly urgent case to illustrate this grave emergency in Africa than to focus on the very country from where it first originated. This country goes by the name Nigeria and it is to it that we should now turn.

2 IGBO GENOCIDE AND ITS AFTERMATH – THE TRAGEDY OF AFRICA’S UNLEARNED LESSONS

In 1966, soon after the world commemorated the 21st anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz and made the customary, solemn declaration of “Never, Never Again”, Nigeria defiled that season of reflection, commiseration and hope. Its military officers, the police, Hausa-Fulani emirs, muslim clerics and intellectuals, civil servants, journalists, politicians and other public figures planned and executed the Igbo genocide – the foundational genocide of post-(European)conquest Africa. This is also Africa’s most devastating genocide of the 20th century. As already stated, 3.1 million Igbo people, a quarter of the nation’s population at the time, were murdered between 29 May 1966 and 12 January 1970.

Most of Africa and the world stood by and watched, hardly critical or condemnatory of this wanton destruction of human lives, raping, sacking and plundering of towns, villages, community after community in Biafra and elsewhere... Most Igbo were slaughtered in their homes, offices, businesses, schools, colleges, hospitals, markets, churches, shrines, farmlands, factories/industrial enterprises, children’s playground, town halls, refugee centres, cars, lorries, and at bus stations, railway stations, airports and on buses, trains and planes and on foot, or starved to death – the openly propagated regime-“weapon” to achieve its heinous goal more speedily. In the end, the Igbo genocide was enforced, devastatingly, by Nigeria’s simultaneously pursued land, aerial and naval blockade and bombardment of Igboland, Africa’s highest population density region outside the Nile Delta.

Earlier on in 1945 and 1953, under the very watch of the British occupation, the Hausa-Fulani political leadership had carried out

two premeditated pogroms on Igbo immigrant populations in Jos and Kano, cities in north Nigeria, in opposition to the Igbo vanguard role in the struggle for the restoration of the independence of peoples in Nigeria from the British conquest. Hundreds of Igbo were murdered in each occasion and tens of thousands of pounds sterling worth of their property looted or destroyed. Neither in Kano nor Jos did the occupation regime apprehend or prosecute anyone for these massacres and destruction. The perpetrators, who subsequently seized and pillaged the rich Nigeria economy appear to have got off free from any forms of sanctions from Africa (and the world) for what are, unquestionably, crimes against humanity.

Tragically, these pogroms turned out as “dress rehearsals” for the 1966-1970 genocide. The consequences for Africa have been catastrophic. Several regimes elsewhere in Africa are “convinced” of the conclusions that they have drawn from this crime by their Nigerian counterpart: “We can murder our peoples at will. There will be no sanctions from Africa and the world”. As a result, the Igbo genocide becomes the clearing site for the haunting killing fields that would snake across the African geographical landscape in the subsequent 40 years with the murders of additional 12 million Africans, since January 1970, as we have shown.

3 YAKI, IT ISN'T

The records of those who carried out the Igbo genocide make no pretences, offer no excuses, whatsoever, about the goal of their dreadful mission – such are the maniacal insouciance and rabid Igbophobia that propelled the project. The principal language used in the prosecution of the genocide is Hausa. The words of the ghoulish anthem of the genocide, published and broadcast on Kaduna radio and television throughout the duration of the crime, are in Hausa:

Mu je mu kashe nyamiri
Mu kashe maza su da yan maza su
Mu chi mata su da yan mata su
Mu kwashe kaya su

Let's go kill the damned Igbo
 Kill off their men and boys

Rape their wives and daughters
Cart off their property

The Hausa word for war is *yaki*. Whilst Hausa speakers would employ this word to refer to the involvement/combat services of their grandfathers, fathers, uncles, sons, brothers, other relatives/friends in “Boma” (reference to World War II Burma [contemporary Myanmar] military campaigns/others in southeast Asia, fighting for the British against the Japanese) or even in the post-1960s Africa-based “peace-keeping” military engagements in west, east and central Africa, they rarely use *yaki* to describe the May 1966-January 1970 mass murders of Igbo people. In Hausaspeak, the latter is either referred to as *lokochi mu kashe nyamiri* (“when we murdered the damned Igbo”) or *lokochi muna kashe nyamiri* (“when we were murdering the damned Igbo”). Pointedly, this *lokochi* (when, time) conflates the timeframes that encapsulate the two phases of the genocide (May 1966-October 1966 and July 1967-January 1970), a reminder, if one is required, for those who bizarrely, if not mischievously, wish to break this organic link.

Elsewhere, genocidist documentation on this crime is equally malevolent and brazenly vulgar. A study of the genocide-time/“post”-genocide era interviews, comments, broadcasts and writings on the campaign by key genocidist commanders, commandants and “theorists” is at once revealing and profoundly troubling.

Benjamin Adekunle, a notoriously gruesome commander, had no qualms, indeed, in boasting about the goal of this horrendous mission when he told an August 1968 press conference, attended by journalists including those from the international media: “We shoot at everything that moves, and when our forces march into the centre of I[gb]bo territory, we shoot at everything, even at things that do not move”.⁵ True to type, Adekunle duly carried through his threat with clinical precision both on his “everything that moves”-targeting, particularly in south Igboland where his forces slaughtered hundreds of thousands, and on the “things that do not

⁵ *The Economist*, London, 24 August 1968.

move"-assault category. Adekunle's gratuitous destruction of the famed Igbo economic infrastructure, one of the most advanced in Africa of the era, is indescribably barbaric.

A brief review of Olusegun Obasanjo's own contribution (published in his memoirs, appropriately entitled, *My Command*) that focuses on his May 1969 direct orders to his air force to destroy an international Red Cross aircraft carrying relief supplies to the encircled and blockaded Igbo is crucially appropriate. Obasanjo had "challenged", to quote his words, Gbadomosi King (genocidist air force pilot), who he had known since 1966, to "produce results" in stopping further international relief flight deliveries to the Igbo.⁶ Within a week of his infamous challenge, 5 June 1969, Obasanjo recalls nostalgically, Gbadomosi King "redeemed his promise".

Gbadomosi King had shot down a clearly marked, incoming relief-bearing International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) DC-7 plane near Eket, south Biafra, with the loss of its 3-person crew. Obasanjo's satisfaction over the aftermath of this horrendous crime is chillingly revolting. He writes:

The effect of [this] singular achievement of the Air Force especially on 3 Marine Commando Division [the notorious unit Obasanjo, who later becomes Nigeria's head of regime for 11 years, commanded] was profound. It raised morale of all service personnel, especially of the Air Force detachment concerned and the troops they supported in [my] 3 Marine Commando Division.⁷

Yet despite the huffing and puffing, this raving commanding is someone who lacks the courage to face up to a world totally outraged by his gruesome crime. Instead, Obasanjo, the quintessential Caliban, cringes into a stupor and beacons to his Prospero, British Prime Minister Harold Wilson (as he, Obasanjo, indeed unashamedly acknowledges in his *My Command*),⁸ to "sort out" the raging international outcry generated by the destruction of the ICRC plane. Instructively, it is this same Olusegun Obasanjo that the London *Financial Times* recently proclaimed the "godfather

6 Olusegun Obasanjo, *My Command*, 1980, p. 78.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 79.

8 *Ibid.*, p. 165.

of modern Nigeria”⁹ without, of course, the irony intended. If the *Financial Times* is correct, then Olusegun Obasanjo’s must be one of the most troubling terms of paternity that the world must have to deal with and those who call themselves Nigerians do have the scariest scourge of inheritance to live with. As the *Financial Times* is so enamoured of Olusegun Obasanjo, it is now incumbent on this publication to perhaps upgrade its client to some “global status” by naming two other countries from each of the following regions of the world to where Olusegun Obasanjo should also be installed “godfather”: Africa, Asia, Australasia, Central America/ the Caribbean, Europe, North America, South America...

4 WHAT “INTERNAL AFFAIR”? WHOSE “INTERNAL AFFAIR”?

There was an extensive coverage of the Igbo genocide in the international media throughout its duration. For most countries of Africa in addition to the Organisation of African Unity, the continent’s supranational body, there was silence in their condemnation of the Igbo genocide. On the contrary, in conference communiqué after conference communiqué issued throughout the 44-month duration of the slaughter, most of Africa considered the genocide a “Nigerian internal affair”.¹⁰ It is precisely because the perpetrators of the Igbo genocide appeared to have been let off the hook for their crimes by the rest of Africa (and the wider world as we shall elaborate soon) that Africa did not have to wait very long before the politics of the Nigeria genocide-state metamorphosed violently beyond the Nigerian frontiers.

Leaders elsewhere on the continent would subsequently wage their own versions of the liquidation of “opponents” of subjugated nations and nationalities and others as ruthlessly and horrifically as they could, à la Nigeria, because they expected no sanctions from either their African colleagues or from the rest of the international community. As a result, as already indicated, the killing

9 *The Financial Times*, London, 14 April 2012.

10 Herbert Ekwe-Ekwe, *Conflict and Intervention in Africa*. London and Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1990, p. 51-58.

fields from Igboland expanded almost inexorably across *every* geographical region of Africa.

As for the United Nations, it, too, never condemned the Igbo genocide unequivocally. U Thant, its secretary-general, consistently maintained that it was a “Nigerian internal affair”. The United Nations could have stopped the genocide; the United Nations should have stopped the genocide instead of protecting the interests of the Nigeria state, the very perpetrator of the crime. In the wake of the Jewish genocide of the 1930s-1940s during which 6 million Jews were murdered by Nazi Germany, Africa was, with hindsight, most cruelly unlucky to have been the testing ground for the presumed global community’s resolve to fight genocide subsequently, particularly after the 1948 historic United Nations declaration on this crime against humanity.¹¹ Only a few would have failed to note that U Thant’s reference to “internal” was staggeringly disingenuous as genocide, as was demonstrated devastatingly 20-30 years earlier on in Europe, would of course occur within some territoriality (“internal”) where the perpetrator exercises a permanent or limited or partial or temporary socio-political control.¹²

Between 1966 and 2006, the world would witness genocide carried out against the Igbo, the Tutsi/some Hutu, and Darfuri in “internal” spaces that go by the names *Nigeria*, *Rwanda*, and *the Sudan* respectively. The contours of the territory where genocide is executed *do not therefore* make the perpetrators less culpable nor the crime permissible as the United Nations’s crucial 1948 genocide declaration states unambiguously.

The very central role played by Britain in support of the Igbo genocide no doubt reinforced the failure of the United Nations to protect Igbo people during this catastrophe. Britain, a fully-fledged member of the United Nations (indeed a founding member of the organisation who enjoys a permanent seat on its security council and participated in drafting the anti-genocide declaration)

11 Cf. Hugh McCullum, *Biafra was the beginning*, <http://www.africafiles.org/article.asp?ID=5549> (accessed 14 June 2010).

12 Cf. Nazi Germany and its programme to destroy its Jewish population *within* Germany itself; Nazi Germany and its programme to destroy Jewish populations *within* those countries in Europe under its occupation from 1939 and 1945.

supported the Igbo genocide militarily, politically and diplomatically – from its early conceptualisation, liaising continuously with the Yakubu Gowon-Murtala Mohammed-Yakubu Danjuma genocidist cells of the Nigeria military at varying stages between January and May 1966 to the savage, spiralling, aerial, naval and ground onslaughts on encircled Igbo population centres (the “shooting everything”-raging inferno) especially between March 1968 and January 1970.

It is extraordinary that in his otherwise informative study, *Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice* (2006), Geoffrey Robertson, a British human rights lawyer, a queen’s counsel, does not discuss the Igbo genocide anywhere in his 759-page text nor Britain’s *instrumental* role in perpetrating this foundational genocide of post-(European)conquest Africa.

Britain was deeply riled by the Igbo lead-role in terminating its occupation of Nigeria and had since sought to “punish” them for this. A senior British foreign office official was adamant that his government’s position on international relief supply effort to the encircled and bombarded Igbo was to “show conspicuous zeal in relief while in fact letting the little buggers starve out”.¹³

Indeed as the slaughtering of the Igbo progressively worsened, Prime Minister Wilson was unashamedly unfazed when he informed Clyde Ferguson (United States State Department special coordinator for relief to Biafra) that he, Harold Wilson, “would accept a half million dead Biafrans if that was what it took”¹⁴ Nigeria to destroy the Igbo resistance. This Wilson’s declaration on the Igbo genocide is in fact more repugnant than those made by some of the most vociferous Nigerian genocidist commanders and propagandists operating *on the ground* during the slaughtering. Such is the expressed diminution of African life made by a leading politician of the world of the 1960s, barely 20 years after the deplorable perpetration of the Jewish genocide. As the final tally of

13 Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness: Henry Kissinger & American Foreign Policy*, London & New York: Quartet Books, 1977, p. 122. See also Michael Leapman, While the Biafrans starved, the FO moaned with hacks, *The Independent on Sunday*, London, 3 January 1999.

14 Roger Morris, *Uncertain Greatness*, p. 122.

the murder of the Igbo demonstrates, Harold Wilson probably had the perverted satisfaction that his Nigerian allies performed far in excess of his grim target... Predictably, it was to Wilson that the Nigerians turned to, in 1969, to “sort out” the international revulsion generated by the latter’s destruction of the ICRC aircraft as we pointed out earlier. Alas, Harold Wilson had apparently set the tone and benchmark of “dispensability” against which African life would be “valued” in Africa itself, particularly by the continent’s genocidist troopers, as well as abroad.

5 OZOEMENA

Not to the European World, though, does this Wilson malevolent logic apply. On the contrary, for the European World, following the Jewish genocide of the 1930s-1940s, the purposeful resolve struck for the future course of societal direction and progress, rightly so, is *ozoemena* – “never again”. Never again, European World leaders affirmed, would any peoples of European descent anywhere and at anytime on earth be murdered so malefically and callously for any reason(s) whatsoever.

In 1992, I published a satirical commentary entitled *Is Bosnia-Herzegovina in Africa?*¹⁵ in which I meditated on the ongoing robust intervention by the leaders of the Western World of the age (George W. Bush, John Major, François Mitterrand, Helmut Kohl) to halt the gestating multipronged genocide in the then Yugoslavia. For days, I was overwhelmed by this laudable intervention to uphold a key fundamental right of human beings: the right to life. The irony of this move was of course not lost on anyone.

Since May 1966 some political leaderships of the same European World have, in complicity with their African clients in the field, waged or abetted campaigns of genocide against African peoples. Pertinently, the unfolding genocide in the Balkans that had elicited this intervention was very similar to what the Igbo and some other Africans had been subjected to during the course of the previous 30 years. I couldn’t stop imagining what effect a

15 Herbert Ekwe-Ekwe, *Is Bosnia Herzegovina in Africa? Reflections on the regionalism of wars and conflicts since World War II*, *African Peoples Review*, v. 1, n.1, June 1992, p. 15.

similar intervention would have had on Biafra, the Congos, Liberia and elsewhere in Africa... If the peoples in Bosnia-Herzegovina were indeed Africans, I wondered, would there have been this high-powered intervention to stop genocide? Could Harold Wilson have waged a genocidal campaign against a European World people, for instance, during the course of 29 May 1966-12 January 1970, similar to his campaign against the Igbo? If not, why not?

In the spirit of *ozoemena*, the Europeans successfully blocked the simmering genocide in the Balkans. Again, in the spirit of *ozoemena*, the Europeans worked assiduously to break up the immanently fractured states in the region (Yugoslavia, Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia) which they knew could not guarantee the rights and aspirations of constituent nations and peoples – a recipe for the perpetration of genocide. Since then, in the spirit of *ozoemena*, 22 new sovereign states, including Kosovo (population: 1.8 million), have emerged in Europe. This is a figure that is four states less than one-half of the total number of so-called sovereign states in Africa, the latter's much larger territorial size and population notwithstanding.

On this score, is it not ironical that in the same week in February 2008 that US President George W Bush ecstatically recognised Kosova rights to exercise their sovereign rights to declare themselves independent from Serbia, US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was busy pressurising Africans in Kenya to forego their own sovereign rights, demonstrated, in this case, by electing a government of their choice in December 2007.

So, as far as the European World is concerned, in the spirit of *ozoemena*, a European nation or people is deemed *superior* to the State. A people does not even have to feel "threatened" in the existing state where it is found to lose this status as the Scots in Britain currently demonstrate.¹⁶ This position is indeed correct for all nations and peoples, not just Europeans. African nations and peoples are also superior to the State. The nation, the people, is enduring; the State is transient.

16 Herbert Ekwe-Ekwe, *Rights for Scots, Rights for the Igbo*, <http://re-thinkingafrica.blogspot.co.uk/2012/01/rights-for-scots-rights-for-igbo.html>, 17 January 2012 (accessed 5 June 2012).

6 THE PEOPLES *VERSUS* THE STATE

That the State is inferior to its peoples, irrespective of race, continent, region, religion/belief system, is irrefutable. As a result, and graciously for that matter, Prime Minister John Major of Britain, back in 1992, did not utter some obscenity during the period, à la his predecessor 25 years before, of willing to “accept” the death of “one half million” Serb or Albanian or Croat to keep Yugoslavia “intact”; neither did Major dabble into some nonsense of the “inviolability” or “indivisibility” of the Yugoslav state, an artificial assemblage concocted at the same time in 1918 as the equally inchoate Czechoslovakia and Soviet Union.

Pointedly, these two often-repeated vulgarities, just quoted, were a favourite of Harold Wilson’s on Nigeria in the 1960s as well as by Nigerian genocidists whose state, cobbled together by Britain in 1914, also shares the same *non-organic* kinship as the central/east European examples. It is now evident that this foundational genocide of post-(European)conquest Africa and the worst in 20th century Africa would probably not have occurred without British active involvement.

As a result, Britain, crucially, has played a *key role* in the emergence of the ongoing age of pestilence ravaging Africa. The continuing presentation of the British policy to Africa since the May 1966 outbreak of the Igbo genocide in both academia and media, particularly in the Western World, as that of some benign foreign state proffering “aid”/“development” programme(s) is at best evasive but at worst staggeringly denialist and thus fraudulent. It is indeed inconceivable that a contemporary British government would continue to delay any much longer the historic task of offering its unreserved public apology to the Igbo, one of humanity’s most hardworking and peaceful peoples, for Britain’s central role in the execution of this genocide and pay reparations to the survivors.

So without this entrenched British role, there probably would not have been the Igbo genocide. Quite clearly, Nigeria did not have an arms-manufacturing capacity then to embark on this terror without such external support. Forty-six years on, Nigeria still does not have such an internal military capability. It still relies

heavily on Britain, currently the world's leading arms exporter to Africa,¹⁷ for its supplies.

One immediate move that Britain, the West, and the rest of the world, including Brazil, particularly, can make to support the ongoing efforts by peoples in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa to rid themselves of the genocide-state is to ban all arms sales to Nigeria and the rest of Africa.¹⁸ This ban must be total and comprehensive. Nigeria and other Africa genocide-states require the political and diplomatic support from abroad as much as they depend on the deadly array of arms ever streaming into their arsenal from Britain and elsewhere to exist and terrorise the people(s) in their territories. This is part of the cardinal and enduring lessons of the Igbo genocide. The legacy has, in fact, been catastrophic and feeds into the overarching strategic permutations of AFRICOM which the latter, in turn, exploits.

A total and comprehensive arms ban on Africa will radically advance the current hectic quest on the ground by peoples across the continent to construct democratic and extensively decentralised new state forms that guarantee and safeguard human rights, equality and freedom for individuals and peoples – *alternatives* to the extant genocide-state. Africans know very well that there are alternatives to the genocide-state. They have both the vision and the capacity to create these alternatives. For Africans, indeed, the creation of these alternatives is imperative in this 'age of pestilence'. Nothing else.

The right of Africans to form their own state, away from the extant, murderous European-created state, is the corpus of my *The Biafra War, Nigeria and the Aftermath*, the second of the two books on the Igbo genocide I published in 1990. In the concluding pages of this book I note the following:¹⁹

17 Antony Barnett, *UK arms sales to Africa reach £1 billion mark*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2005/jun/12/uk.hearafrica05> (accessed 13 June 2005).

18 For a more encompassing discussion on the total ban on all arms sales and transfers to Africa and declaring the continent an Arms-Free Zone, see Ekwe-Ekwe, *Readings from Reading*, especially chapter 31.

19 Herbert Ekwe-Ekwe, *The Biafra War, Nigeria and the Aftermath*, Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: Mellen, 1990, p. 124-125.

Either in peace, or war, the existence of the European post-colonial state is inimical to the interests of African peoples. It is a state that cannot provide the fundamental needs of Africans ... The African humanity is presently gripped in a grave crisis for survival. It is now time that it abandoned the contrived post-colonial state in order to survive ... African nations, [namely] Igbo, Wolof, Yoruba, Asante, Baganda, Bakongo, Bambara, etc., etc ... remain the basis for the regeneration of Africa's development ... [and] the sites of the continent's intellectual and other cultural creativity ... What is being stressed here is that African peoples, themselves, must decide on the ... issue of sovereignty ... even if the outcome were to lead to 1000 states ... For the future survival of the African humanity, let no more Africans have to die for the defence of, or for upholding the territorial frontier of any post-colonial state. No precious life should be wasted for its preservation.

Twenty-two years on, these words remain crucially pivotal in focusing our minds on the very survival of the Igbo and all other African peoples. The Igbo and all others who have lived through the terror of the post-(European)conquest state must abandon it at once to survive and advance towards the construction of higher levels of civilisation. They have no other choice. Each and every constituent African people or nation can build this civilisation outside the existing genocide state of enthralled and degenerative union.

Let Africa's constituent peoples or nations unleash a dazzling contest of creativity and progress, a continuing mutual bombardment and sharing of ideas and streams of possibilities, akin to what the world has seen in Asia, South America and elsewhere in the past 40 years – not mass murdering ... mass murdering ... mass murdering ... pillaging ... pillaging ... pillaging ... nihilism ... nihilism ... nihilism ... Most surely, now is the time to embark on this beginning.