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HURIWA Condemns Police, Military Attacks on Aba Traders

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Chief of Army Staff, Major General Tukur Buratai

The Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has called on the Chief of Army Staff, Major General Tukur Buratai, to order the arrest and prosecution of Army operatives in Aba, Abia State, who at the weekend shot and killed innocent bystanders inside the Ariaria International Market in Aba.

Besides, the rights group has also demanded the arrest and prosecution of some rogue police operatives who also shot and killed cobbler in Aba earlier on Sunday in the same market.

HURIWA, in a statement signed jointly by the National Coordinator, Mr. Emmanuel Onwubiko and the National Media affairs Director Miss Zainab Yusuf, said those police operatives who gunned down this innocent shoemaker must be fetched and prosecuted or the rights group would drag the Inspector General of Police, Mr. Solomon Arase, before the International Criminal Court in The Hague, Netherlands, for prosecution over refusal to try his subordinates for crimes against humanity.

In the same vein, HURIWA has handed a seven days ultimatum to the Army hierarchy in Abuja headed by Major General Tukur Buratai to arrest the soldiers who perpetrated the dastardly criminal acts of deploying brute force that resulted to the extrajudicial killing of over four traders in Aba, the commercial nerve centre of the South-east of Nigeria.

“We have just defended the military as an institution over its indictments by Amnesty International for crimes against humanity in its operation

against terrorists in the North-east of Nigeria because we are convinced that as an institution, it does not as a policy tolerate human rights violations committed by the operatives. We are prepared to give the Nigerian Army the benefits of the doubts over these killings in the South-east of Nigeria but only to the extent of allowing the top echelon move in quickly and round up these rogue elements in their ranks that brutally killed traders who were forced on gun points to close shops following a peaceful protest by other traders in another section of the same market over the extra judicial killing by police of an innocent shoemaker who was hit by stray bullets shot by some policemen who came to arrest suspected Indian hemp smokers who nevertheless ran away from the police.

“General Buratai must arrest and begin the prosecution of these soldiers or he should be prepared to face the full wrath of international prosecution because we will send petitions to both the ICC and the United Nations Human Rights Council and we will mobilise forces in the organised civil society to sensitise the international community to know that the new military authorities in Nigeria have indeed started executing innocent persons in the guise of quelling civil protests.

“Civil protest is a human right, so those police operatives and soldiers that killed innocent civilians in Aba must be prosecuted.

“President Buhari should show Nigerians that he has truly become a democrat by ensuring that those who carry out extra legal executions of unarmed civilians are themselves prosecuted and executed for mass murders.”

HURIWA warned that it will not relent in ensuring that those soldiers and police operatives who killed innocent traders are brought before the court of law for their crimes against humanity.

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