

## PRESS RELEASE

### FACTS ABOUT THE COMMUNAL CLASH BETWEEN IGBIDE AND OKPOLO-ENHWE

Following the unfortunate, unprovoked, premeditated and coordinated attacks on the peace-loving people of Igbide Kingdom by Okpolo-Enhwe clan, there has been a spate of sponsored fallacious news reports in the print and online media. These tissues of lies must be dismantled and de-constructed to enable the public know the truth.

For the benefit of the uninformed, Igbide Community, with heavy hearts, hereby presents an accurate and factual account of the unprovoked, premeditated and coordinated attacks which have increased in intensity with time. These attacks began a year ago with sporadic harassment of Igbide citizens in the course of their lawful farming and fishing businesses within Igbide territory. In a span of 6 months, no less than 15 Igbide people suffered beatings, machete cuts, damage to personal implements, motor-cycles, motor vehicles and bicycles, inflicted by Okpolo-Enhwe people. Some Igbide indigenes, including a pregnant woman who was dealt a severe machete cut in her buttocks, are still in hospital recuperating from life-threatening injuries sustained during these acts of physical harassment.

As a peaceful and law-abiding people, Igbide Community reported these violations to the government authorities and law enforcement agents. Little did we know that the successive incidents of harassments were a precursor to a major invasion of Igbide Community. The grand plot to take out Igbide climaxed on the night of Friday 6th May, 2016, when Okpolo-Enhwe Community attacked Igbide with their indigenes and mercenaries who used highly sophisticated weapons at about 1.30am.

Not done yet, they returned with greater force and intensity at about 7.00am in the morning during which two able-bodied youths of Igbide namely **Oghenekaro Okovove** and **Okorofa Otolor Erobi** were macheted to death and their corpses taken away. Aside from the killings, buildings were torched and vandalized. The news of the killing of Messrs. Okorofa and Oghenekaro by Okpolo-Enhwe youths created tension and pandemonium in the community. As if the damage done on our people was not enough, on Saturday the 7th of May, 2016, Okpolo-Enhwe youths returned for another round of violent attack, but they were met with resistance.

In the aftermath of the clash, peace meetings were initiated by the Isoko Development Union (IDU), Isoko South Local Government Council and Delta State Government with representatives of the security agencies present. Igbide people participated whole-heartedly in the peace meetings in spite of the unprovoked attack. Representatives of both communities agreed to work towards peace and normalcy. But with the benefit of hindsight, this was only a subterfuge by Okpolo-Enhwe to lull Igbide to sleep to enable them implement the grand plot to annihilate Igbide.

With total disregard for the truce arranged at the government's instance, Okpolo-Enhwe, apparently unsatisfied with the number of casualties and level of carnage already visited on Igbide people, launched another attack on the night of Sunday May 8, 2016 at about 11.00pm in Owodokpokpo-Igbide, in spite of the presence of soldiers who came on ground after the first invasion. This is another copious evidence of their belligerence. This attack left 3 buildings and properties worth millions of naira destroyed.

The level of sophistication of the arms used by the Okpolo-Enhwe invaders in both attacks and capacity to launch four major assaults on Igbide Kingdom in quick successions and on two fronts clearly shows that Okpolo-Enhwe had prepared well in advance. In their desperation to visit more carnage on Igbide, Okpolo-Enhwe violated the territory of neutral Umeh Community. Igbide community hereby calls on the security agencies and government to protect and save Igbide from being wiped off the face of the earth by the Okpolo-Enhwe invaders.



Igbido Blessing pregnant woman macheted in the buttock



Late Mr. Okorofa Erobi Otolor



Late Mr. Oghenekaro Okovove who hails from Oteri-Igbide but resided in Okpohro Community in Igbide 1

Our greatest desire is for peace to reign. We call on Okpolo-Enhwe Community to toe the same path as war only brings pain, sorrow and hardship. The present economic situation of the country has put individual families under severe strain and one really wonders what the Okpolo-Enhwe leadership stands to gain from inflicting further hardship on the innocent people of both communities through a needless war. Indeed, we find it difficult to understand why an entire community could be led down the path of destruction by one misguided "militant youth" in Okpolo-Enhwe.

As war produces no victors but only victims, Igbide has made 'peace' her mantra and this has yielded results as the community has repeatedly won the Most Peaceful Community Award in Isoko Nation. We have always sued for and kept the peace and wish Okpolo-Enhwe would do the same.

We, the leaders of Igbide commend the Chairman of Isoko South Local Government Area, Sir Constantine Ithiako Ikpokpo (KSM) for his quick response to the call to save Igbide people on 6th May, 2016 when two of our boys were killed by Okpolo-Enhwe youths.

In the same vein, we condemn in very strong terms the attack on the Chairman's convoy. All those involved in this criminal act should be brought to book.

While she prays for peace, Igbide Community is watchful and vigilant.

*[Signature]*  
**CHIEF (DR.) D.S. EDEGWARE (JP)**  
 President, Igbide Union, Igbide.