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FROM SHELL LAGOS MD
URGENT TO BIPC LONDON WA (WA/4)
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SECURITY/COMMUNITY DISTURBANCES

COMMUNITY DISTURBANCES HAVE BEEN COMMONPLACE IN OUR OPERATIONS FOR MANY YEARS BUT EVENTS OF THE LAST WEEKS IN THE WESTERN DIVISION AND THE ONGOING DIFFICULTIES IN THE OGONI AREA, COUPLED WITH THE GROWTH OF VIOLENT CRIME IN THE NIGER DELTA AREA, GIVE CAUSE FOR SERIOUS CONCERN. YOU ARE AWARE THAT WE HAD BEEN ANTICIPATING THIS AND HENCE OUR EFFORTS TO UPGRADE OUR CONTINGENCY PLANS, PUBLIC AFFAIRS, PA EFFORT AND SECURITY COVER.

WE HAVE A STATUTORY DUTY TO REPORT ALL SIGNIFICANT DISTURBANCES TO THE MINISTRY, DPR, NNPC, POLICE AND OTHER AUTHORITIES, BOTH AT THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVEL. OBVIOUSLY, THE CONTACT IS MORE INTENSE IN THE DIVISIONS BUT IT IS ALSO ESSENTIAL TO MOBILISE SUPPORT AT TOP GOVERNMENT LEVELS. WE HAVE NATURALLY BEEN IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE SECRETARY FOR PETROLEUM WHO BRIEFS HIS COLLEAGUES. IN ADDITION, ACHEBE HAS BEEN LIAISING WITH THE POLICE AND STATE SECURITY SERVICES IN ABUJA.

WATTS AND ACHEBE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT ABUJA TODAY AND THE FOLLOWING SUMMARISES THE GIST OF THE DISCUSSIONS.

1. CHIEF SHONEKAN - CHAIRMAN OF TRANSITIONAL COUNCIL

THE DISCUSSION LASTED SOME 75 MINUTES WITH ABOUT 30 MINUTES ON NLNG WHICH IS REPORTED IN A SEPARATE TELEX. THE SESSION STARTED WITH PLEASANTRIES ABOUT DEEP WATER WHICH HE REGARDS AS A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE TRANSITIONAL COUNCIL.

CASH CALLS

WE THEN TURNED TO CASH CALLS ABOUT WHICH HE IS OBVIOUSLY VERY CONCERNED. HE HAD SEEN THE MD'S LETTER TO ASIODU AND DISCUSSED IT WITH THE PRESIDENT... AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF BAD MANAGEMENT IN NNPC. SHONEKAN AND ASIODU HAD ALREADY BEEN TALKING WITH THE PRESIDENT ABOUT A "PURGE" OF NNPC AND "SWALLOWING OUR PRIDE" AND INVITING FOREIGN COMPANIES TO TAKE A STAKE IN THE REFINERIES. HE COMPLAINED ABOUT THE MISHANDLING BY NNPC OF THE OIL SUBSIDY REMOVAL AND THEIR VESTED INTERESTS IN THE CURRENT SITUATION AS WELL AS THE "SABOTAGING" OF REFINERIES. HE INDICATED THAT THE PURGE IS IMMINENT. ON AN IMMEDIATE NOTE HE WAS ANTICIPATING A STORMY COUNCIL MEETING TODAY WITH NORTHERN MEMBER CALLING FOR HEADS TO ROLL OVER THE FUEL SHORTAGE.

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COMMUNITY DISTURBANCES/SECURITY

THE GOVERNMENT IS CLEARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN THE NIGER DELTA, PARTICULARLY THE ACTIVITIES IN THE OSONI AREA. THERE IS AN ONGOING CONCERTED CAMPAIGN TO SPLIT OFF THE MORE RADICAL LEADERS AND YOUTH FROM THE MORE MODERATE TRADITIONAL ELDERS IN THAT AREA. SHONEKAN HAD MET ADA GEORGE AND HORSFALL TO REVIEW THE SITUATION. HE HAS FLOWN OVER THE AREA AND WAS APPALLED AT THE LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES AND IS NOW STRESSING THE NEED FOR ACTUAL PROJECTS ON THE GROUND ORGANISED BY OMPADEC. HE DWELT ON THE THRUST OF HIS ARGUMENT WITH THE PRESIDENT TO TACKLE THE ROOT CAUSES OF DISAFFECTION, I.E. THE LACK OF FEDERAL PRESENCE IN THE NIGER DELTA. IN ADDITION, HE ALLUDED TO THE NEED FOR THE TRADITIONAL RULERS IN THE NIGER DELTA TO HAVE "ALLOCATIONS" (IN THE SAME MANNER AS OTHERS IN THE COUNTRY E.G. THE OONI OF IFE AND SULTAN OF SOKOTO ARE CRUDE TRADERS). ...HE WAS APPARENTLY NOT AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE WESTERN DIVISIONS WHEN HE WAS BRIEFED ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS. WE INFORMED HIM ABOUT OUR EFFORTS TO WORK WITH THE POLICE, PROVIDING LOGISTIC SUPPORT FOR THEIR PROTECTION OF KEY LOCATIONS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THE LACK OF EQUIPMENT AND LACK OF MORALE IN THE POLICE. HE SUPPORTED THIS APPROACH, MENTIONING THAT THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY HAS MADE STRONG REPRESENTATIONS TO HIM AND OTHER AUTHORITIES WHICH SHOULD RESULT IN AN ARMED TASK FORCE IN LAGOS, FUNDED BY THE EMBASSIES.

2. INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF POLICE - ALHAJI ATTAN

WE MET ALHAJI ATTAN FOR 20 MINUTES AND EXPLAINED OUR CONCERNS OVER COMMUNITY UNREST AND THE SECURITY SITUATION IN BOTH WESTERN AND EASTERN DIVISIONS. THE OPPORTUNITY WAS TAKEN TO STRESS THE NEED FOR EXTRA POLICE PRESENCE IN STRATEGIC LOCATIONS AND OFFER LOGISTIC SUPPORT (SINCE THEY ARE INCAPABLE TO DOING IT THEMSELVES). THE IG RESPONDED FAVOURABLY BUT STRESSED THAT THIS IS A TEMPORARY SOLUTION AND REQUESTED THAT WE MAKE OUR CONCERNS KNOWN TO SHONEKAN AND ASIODU. WE WERE ABLE TO BRIEF HIM ON OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM.

WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THIS IS NOT JUST A SHELL DRIVEN EXERCISE AND, TO CUT A LONG STORY SHORT, THE UPSHOT WAS AGREEMENT THAT HE WILL SIGNAL HIS ZONE COMMANDERS (ASST. IG'S IN BENIN AND CALABAR WHO COVER THE WHOLE NIGER DELTA) TO ATTEND A MEETING WITH ALL THE OIL COMPANY MD'S ON 19/5/93 IN PORT HARCOURT (WHERE THEY HAD ALREADY MET CHIEF HORSFALL OF OMPADEC).

IN SHORT THE IG WAS WELL BRIEFED, KNEW WHAT WE WERE COMING FOR AND HAD ALREADY DECIDED ON HIS RESPONSE.

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3. DIRECTOR-GENERAL - STATE SECURITY SERVICES - PETER NWAODUAH

ANOTHER 20 MINUTES SESSION TO EXPRESS OUR VERY SERIOUS CONCERN BRIEF HIM ON RECENT EVENTS AND REITERATE OUR REQUESTS FOR SUPPORT FROM THE POLICE AND ARMY. HE WAS OBVIOUSLY VERY WELL INFORMED AND REASSURED US THAT THE PRESIDENT IS INVOLVED IN THE RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION. THEY HAVE INSTRUCTED AND POLICE REINFORCEMENTS HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO MAN STRATEGIC POINTS IN THE NIGER DELTA AND THAT TROOPS WOULD BE SENT IN IF NECESSARY. HE BROUGHT UP THE OSONI ISSUE SAYING THAT THE SITUATION WOULD BE UNDER CONTROL VERY SHORTLY. (THIS IS THE SUBJECT OF ANOTHER TELEX). HE STRESSED THE ROLE OF OMPADEC AND WE STRONGLY URGED GETTING SOME PROJECTS ACTUALLY ON THE GROUND IN THE MOST DIFFICULT AREAS.

IN SUMMARY, THE AUTHORITIES APPEAR TO BE TAKING THE SITUATION VERY SERIOUSLY BUT WE WILL HAVE TO ENCOURAGE THE FOLLOW THROUGH INTO REAL ACTION, PREFERABLY ON AN INDUSTRY RATHER THAN SHELL ONLY BASIS.

NOTE: NO REFERENCE TO THIS MESSAGE SHOULD BE QUOTED IN ANY SERIES EXCEPT MOST CONFIDENTIAL

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