



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts:

Salisu A. Abdullah (203) 946-0173

Ichie Chibuzo Onwuchekwe, P.E. (713) 206-6633

Adeola Odusanya (813) 309-4850

COMMUNIQUE ON ACTION TO SIDELINE EFCC'S MALAM NUHU RIBADU

**BY THE
WORLD IGBO CONGRESS, INC., ZUMUNTA ASSOCIATION USA, INC.,
AND EGBE OMO YORUBA, NORTH AMERICA**

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2007, Washington, DC. Disturbing concern for recent statements issued by Nigeria's Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Mr. Mike Okiro regarding the immediate commencement of a one-year compulsory course by Malam Nuhu Ribadu, Executive Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), necessitated an emergency meeting of the leadership of three Nigerian apex socio-cultural organizations in the Diaspora - Zumunta Association USA, World Igbo Congress, Inc., and Egbe Omo Yoruba, North America over the weekend.

At the meeting, Egbe Omo Yoruba, North America was represented by the National President Adeola Odusanya and the National General Secretary, Oladapo Odunlami. Chairman Ichie Chibuzo E. Onwuchekwe, P.E. and Deputy Secretary General Engineer Mike Anunike represented World Igbo Congress, Inc. The National President, Malam Salisu A. Abdullah and the National General Secretary, Dr. Ogbu Agburu, represented Zumunta Association USA, Inc. After statements of opinion and comments followed by discussions, the three groups resolved that a joint position statement on the matter needed to be issued immediately.

STATEMENT OF POSITION

At the 6th National Seminar on Economic Crime held in Abuja, Nigeria on Tuesday, November 13, 2007, President Umaru Musa Yar 'Adua stated, *"The fight against corruption is my fight, one in which I am committed and which we all must be committed."*

Despite all the challenges and obstacles faced by Malam Nuhu Ribadu and his team of economic crime fighters at the EFCC, they have not wavered in their assigned responsibilities. His achievement during his short tenure as Executive Chairman of the EFCC are exemplary and numerous; he gave hope to Nigerians and the rest of the world that Nigeria is finally serious about fighting its world-renowned corruption problem.

We understand that a tree does not make a forest and that a big deal should not be made about one person, but rather the concern should be over the maintenance of the integrity of the position itself. However, given the history of Nigeria and the numerous public attempts by powerful Nigerians who have violated their public trust, plus recent actions by the Attorney General of the Federation to undermine Malam Ribadu's work, we strongly urge his Excellency to repudiate this action as he did in the case of the Naira redenomination and prevent Mr. Okiro from sending Malam Ribadu to a compulsory course at this time.

We ask that this action which is being perceived as another ploy to ease Malam Ribadu out of office, be delayed until the prosecution of most of his currently cases are under way, or for at least another year in order to give Malam Ribadu time to properly hand over to his temporary replacement. Any lesser action

would constitute a caving in to enemies of Nigeria, dirty politicians and others who see Malam Ribadu's continued presence as the EFCC Executive Chairman as a threat to their survival.

We are also appealing to the legislators to constitutionally create among their first order of business this year, an independent counsel type of office for the EFCC with the latitude to investigate and prosecute any economic wrongdoer, free of interference from the executive or legislative branches.

However, appropriate checks and balances including a transparent and proper process for the removal of the EFCC head should be built in. The tenure of the Executive Chairman of the EFCC should also overlap the general elections so that the work of the EFCC can continue independent of who is at the Presidency.

In order to demonstrate to all his true commitment to fighting corruption coupled with a sincere support for his current war against corruption which is epitomized by Malam Nuhu Ribadu's lead EFCC team, we call on the Presidency to override Mr. Okiro's ill advised action, sidelining Malam Ribadu or that he assure the nation and the world that his replacement will receive the same unflinching support needed to fight corruption and make Nigeria great again.

THE WORLD IS WATCHING.

SIGNED THIS 31st DAY OF DECEMBER, 2007:

Malam Salisu A. Abdullah
President, Zumunta, USA, Inc

Ichie Chibuzo E. Onwuchekwe
Chairman, World Igbo Congress, Inc.

Adeola Odusanya
President, Egbe Omo Yoruba, NA

Dr. Ogbu Agburu Eng.
Gen. Sec., Zumunta, USA, Inc.

Mike Anunike
Deputy Sec. Gen., World Igbo Congress, Inc

R. Oladapo Odunlami
Gen. Sec., Egbe Omo Yoruba, NA