Today, the Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation – comprising dozens of waterfront communities and other informal settlements across Lagos – demands the retraction of the purported 7-days' notice to “all water fronts across Lagos” by His Excellency, Governor Akinwunmi Ambode on 9 October 2016.

Waterfront communities across Lagos are home to hundreds of thousands of hard-working, law-abiding citizens. These communities are where we live and where many of us work. Our businesses – from fishing to sand-dealing – and our labor add to the Lagos economy. We are part of Lagos and we have a right to the city. We do not have any other home.

Governor Ambode’s announcement tied the demolition of our communities to security concerns. If the Government wishes to fight crime and insecurity, evictions are not the answer. The answer is to strengthen community policing. Our communities are already taking steps to fight crime through private vigilante that we organize ourselves through household levies. Our vigilante help to patrol our communities and turn apprehended suspects over to police. We are trying our best and we also welcome further partnership from the police and Government to do more on security.

Evictions do not make Lagos safer. Instead, they push the urban poor into deeper poverty through homelessness and loss of livelihoods. Worsened poverty only exacerbates crime. Evictions are not the answer. We need to partner to find lasting solutions to insecurity.

Evictions are also not the way to make Lagos the center of excellence it aspires to be. Lagos is a megacity by virtue of its population. We are part of that population. If we are to become a center of excellence, we cannot try to make the urban poor in our midst disappear. We will not disappear. But, with support and partnership from Government, we can continue developing our communities through in situ slum upgrading and social housing. Indeed, Federation is about to commence on community-financed environmentally sustainable toilet solutions to improve sanitation and public health in our communities. Federation is developing a social housing scheme and planning toward in situ slum upgrading. We are learning from the successes of peers in cities around the world.

agbajowo la fin soya
pili pili toloton mi je po godo tolonayo
unity is our strength
This week, the international community, governments, civil society, and organized communities from around the world will be meeting in Quito, Ecuador to launch the New Urban Agenda known as Habitat III. The Habitat III Agenda embraces participatory, \textit{in situ} upgrading of slums and informal settlements to build resilient cities. Such an urban agenda is essential for us to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – which call for eradication of poverty and upgrading of slums, among others – by the year 2030.

We are ready to do our part to lead \textit{in situ} upgrading in our communities and promote long-term inclusive development of our city. But we need Government’s support and partnership. We need Lagos to reset its aim on building an INCLUSIVE MEGACITY.

The Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation is a movement of the urban poor for our dignity and development, made up of community savings groups in over 70 slums and informal settlements here in Lagos – and growing also in other Nigerian cities. In addition to community-led economic empowerment through our savings groups, we work with our member communities to undertake citywide slum profiling, mapping, and enumeration to identify and understand our development challenges and opportunities to feed into our collective advocacy for a better urban future. We are supported by Justice & Empowerment Initiatives – Nigeria and affiliated with Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI), a global network of slumdwellers’ federations in 36 countries around the world.

Federation has already profiled 40 of the affected waterfront communities, which are home to a total estimated population of over 300,000 hard-working, law-abiding residents. As we continue profiling additional waterfront communities, our hope is that these efforts are not in order for us to be able to number the newly homeless. Instead we hope this community-generated data can help us to partner with Government toward a better tomorrow.

PLEASE JOIN US IN DEMANDING THE RETRACTION OF THE EVICTION NOTICE TO WATERFRONTS ACROSS LAGOS AND CALLING FOR PARTNERSHIP TO FIND LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT. Thank you.

\textit{SIGNED:}

\textbf{NIGERIAN SLUM/INFORMAL SETTLEMENT FEDERATION, LAGOS CHAPTER}

\textit{For more information or to visit some of the affected communities, please contact:}
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