



MEDICAL AND DENTAL CONSULTANTS' ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (MDCAN)

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MDCAN CONDEMNS THE ATTACK ON NIGERIAN YOUTHS.

The Medical and Dental Consultants' Association of Nigeria (MDCAN) has watched with concern the rising tension in the country arising from the #EndSARS protests which have gradually spread to different parts of the country. MDCAN has also observed with concern the apparent inability of the government to assuage the feelings of the protesters and douse tensions in the country.

The demands of the unarmed protesters for an end to police brutality, security of lives and property and good governance are germane and have received widespread support from different quarters across the country, including government. To this extent, we stand with the demand of the peaceful protesters for an end to these excesses of these agents of state, along side other genuine demands.

It was therefore with profound shock and utter disbelief that we received the news of the unconscionable massacre of unarmed protesters in Lekki toll gate yesterday 20.10.2020 in Lagos State. The gory accounts and social media footages of events preceding, during and following the attack paints a graphic picture of the very cause of the protests in the first place. It is also a violent throwback to the dark days of military dictatorship when such events cast Nigeria as a pariah in the comity of nations in the not so distant past.

We affirm that the right to peaceful assembly and protest is a hallmark of the democracy which we have all embraced and celebrate. Our idea of the practice of this system of government cannot be restricted to holding elections alone but by citizen participation in holding said elected officials and other agents of state to account. It is therefore unfathomable that the peaceful exercise of this civic duty has been allowed to degenerate to what it has become.

We call on the government to be alive to the fact that the protest cannot be reduced to the simplistic sobriquet which it bears. A discerning mind will not fail to make the connection between current hardship in the country, the economic difficulties that accompanied the outbreak of COVID-19 outbreak and the government's response to it, some recent unpopular government policies including hikes in taxes, electricity and fuel prices, against the raging youth unemployment and crushing poverty in the land, particularly when juxtaposed in stark relief against the stupendous opulence of elected and appointed government officials.

We therefore call on government to speak to these genuine sources of agitation in trying to assuage the true concerns of the protesters. We call for tact in efforts at resolving the issues emanating as anything short could lead to a spiralling of the current situation out of control, resulting in a situation capable of plunging of the country into anarchy.

We call on both government and protesters not to create an ambience that will allow the takeover of the peaceful protests by miscreants as this could cause further deterioration in the situation. We call for the immediate halt further attacks by agents of state against unarmed protesters in Lagos or any other part of the country. No society or civilization advances by consuming its young. We caution that the eyes of the country and indeed the whole world are watching.

We call on our members all over the country to be on standby to provide emergency care for all victims of this unfortunate and unnecessary violence.

May the good lord heal our country, Amen.


21-10-2020
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