**DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS**

**MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**NIGERIAN MILITARY NOT RECRUITING BOKO HARAM EX FIGHTERS**

The Defence Headquarters has been notified of false information peddled in some online media, insinuating that deradicalized Boko Haram ex- fighters are being absorbed into the Nigerian military. One of such insinuations is contained in a trending video footage published by Roots TV, where one Balhatu Musa Ezekiel claimed the Nigeria Army had recruited de-redicalized Boko Haram Ex-fighters into the Army and was therefore recycling insurgency.

The Defence Headquarters wishes to unambiguously state that Balhatu's claims are not only bereft of truth, but laced with mediocrity emanating from poorly researched and uninformed position.

Contrary to his claims , no Boko Haram ex- fighter has been recruited into the Nigerian military and no such plan is in the offing.

The de-radicalization, rehabilitation and reintegration program is a Federal Government program conducted under the auspices of Operation Safe Corridor as a non- kinetic operation.

Nigeria's De-radicalization model is a very effective one, targeted at low risk combatants and has become a classical example in the Lake Chad Basin Region and West Africa.

Over 250 repentant insurgents who willingly abandoned their struggle and surrendered to federal troops have been de-radicalized, rehabilitated and re-integrated into the society by their respective state governments in conjunction with traditional and religious institutions.

Nigeria's De-radicalization model is therefore not new in the global community, as such model exists in Algeria, Colombia, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, where persons involved in violent extremism have been de-radicalized and rehabilitated . This process is therefore an internationally acceptable practice now.

So far in Nigeria, the de-radicalized ex-fighters are doing well in their respective communities, as no adverse report has been recorded against the de-radicalized repentant ex fighters by Operation Safe Corridor's monitoring unit. There has not been report of molestation or harassment of any sort against them by members of the communities, where they are resettled. As a matter of verifiable fact, the reintegrated ex- fighters are doing well in their various endeavours and are positively impacting on their respective communities.

It is also expedient to state, that the Federal Government of Nigeria has continued to prosecute BHT/ISWAP suspects in courts of competent jurisdiction and over 500 terrorists have so far been convicted. Meanwhile, the next round of prosecution of another batch of terrorism suspects is due to commence shortly.

Members of the public are therefore enjoined to please discountenance the misinformation and misguided views peddled by Balhatu Musa Ezekiel, as it constitutes outright aberration of extant recruitment procedures and practice of the Armed Forces of Nigeria.

The Defence Headquarters reiterates its commitment to ensuring a well motivated, trained and equipped Armed Forces that is professionally responsive to national security commitments.

Please disseminate this information through your news medium.

Thank you for your cooperation.

*Signed*

**ONYEMA NWACHUKWU**

Brigadier General

Acting Director Defence Information