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STATEMENT

My attention has been drawn to articles posted on the social media accusing the Prime Minister of Sao Tome and Principe, H.E. Patrice Emery Trovoada, of financing the July 2003 coup in that country which was rather a coup organised and executed by a group of former members of the Buffalo Battalion, a creation of the South African apartheid army. The coup was aborted and constitutional order reinstated following direct intervention and involvement by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

As the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria then, I accompanied deposed President Fradique de Menezes back to Sao Tome and worked to reverse the illegal takeover of the democratically-elected government and ensured the reinstatement of the legal institutions. This was done with the cooperation of many political leaders including former President Fradique de Menezes, former President Miguel Trovoada, the current Prime Minister Patrice Emery Trovoada, among others. This ensured an amicable resolution of the crisis.

Accusations and insinuations attempting to associate the Prime Minister of Sao Tome and Principe, H.E. Patrice Emery Trovoada, to the coup organisation in 2003 can only be motivated by ignorance and are inconsistent with facts and intelligence on which we relied for our intervention and action.

In view of the central role I played in the resolution of the crisis, I have a moral responsibility to correct wrong impressions and statements and falsification of facts. Discredited mercenaries, who worked to destabilise the country by force of arms, should not be given the chance to achieve, by rumours and falsification of facts, what they could not achieve by force of arms.

As Sao Tome prepares for crucial parliamentary elections, I urge all politicians and political leaders to make their campaigns on facts and constitutional processes and act with decorum and dignity to elevate democracy and to move the country forward politically, economically and socially in unity and harmony.



OLUSEGUN OBASANJO