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PRESS RELEASE FOR THE TAYLOR FAMILY!!

LAGOS GOVERNMENT SHOULD DESIST FROM ILLEGAL AND ARBITRARY TAKE OVER OF THE ALEX KEHINDE TAYLOR'S FAMILY LAND WITHOUT PAYING ANY ADEQUATE COMPENSATION REQUIRED BY LAW

We are Solicitors to the Head and Principal members of E.J. Alex Kehinde Taylor Family (hereinafter referred to as 'Our Clients'). They are the bona fide owners of the large expanse of property comprising 2 Nos. of two Bay warehouses with in-built 2 floor office blocks being at Plot 412/420 Lagos/Abeokuta Expressway measuring approximately 20.98 acres.

Our Clients have exercised all rights of ownership and have been in undisturbed possession since their predecessors-in-title first registered their conveyance in 1912. By a Deed of Conveyance dated 18th September 1912 and registered as No.21 at page 72 in Volume 80 of the Register of Deeds kept in the Lands Registry, Lagos, the Rt. Rev. Bishop James Johnson acquired the entire land in **FEE SIMPLE** from the original owners.

By another Deed of Conveyance dated 19th September 1920 and registered as No.18 at page 60 in Volume 174 of the Register of Deeds kept in the Lands Registry, Lagos, the Executors of the Late Bishop conveyed the entire land to Mr. F.H. Euba in **FEE SIMPLE**.

Also, by a Deed of Conveyance dated the 27th of September 1943 and registered as No.105 at page 105 in Volume 631 of the Register of Deeds kept in the Lands Registry in Lagos, Mr. F.H. Euba conveyed the entire land to E.J. Alex Taylor in **FEE SIMPLE**.

The title of our Clients to the said property is derived from E.J. Alex Taylor and they have been in undisturbed possession. The property was partitioned by the children of E.J. Alexander Taylor in 1976. The warehouses are situate on Plots A and E in the Registered Titles at No.11 page 11 in Volume 1543 and No.7 page 7 in Volume 1543, respectively.

It is instructive to note that sometime in 1938, our Clients leased a portion of the demised property to the Federal Government of Nigeria for the purpose of its Cocoa Regeneration Plant. Our Clients also leased the said property to John Holt who built the factory warehouses during the pendency of their lease. The said factory was fully fenced in the 1970s and has always been in the possession and control of our Clients.

Moreso, our clients have at all material times insured their industrial warehouse complex against the risks of fire and special perils which include explosion, earthquake, hurricane or cyclone, riot and strike etc. through Hogg Robinson Limited with a panel of underwriters including Law Union and Rock Insurance Plc with policy no **P/IAR/15/LAG/TDS00011**.

Our Clients have also been paying the tenement rate, now Land Use Charge, over the subject property and the State Government had on several occasions commended our clients for diligently fulfilling this obligation timeously.

We strongly believe that the Lagos State Government is aware that our clients are the legitimate owners of the subject property at Plots 412/420 Lagos/Abeokuta Expressway, Abule Egba Lagos having sought permission from our Clients in 2009 to complete and construct covered drains through subject property during the construction of Ilupeju/Jibowu Estate Road, Abule Egba in Ifako-Ijaye Local Government Area of Lagos State.

On the 20th day of September 2016, a faction of the Oniyanru Chieftaincy Family and their armed thugs in company of hired policemen forcibly and unlawfully chased away our Clients' employed security personnel, Shepherd Hills Security Limited, who were on duty on the premises, after subject property became vacant with the departure of Unilever Nigeria Plc. in 2014 and took over the same.

Our clients through their counsel petitioned the Lagos State Government through the office of the Chairman of the Lagos State Special Task Force on Land Grabbers about the wrongful and forcible takeover of their property by a faction of the Oniyanru Family and requested to be restored back to possession and for the prompt prosecution of the culprits who were using a forged court judgment to harass and intimidate our Clients.

The Special Task Force on Land Grabbers on the 28th day of September 2016 arrested all the culprits that invaded our Clients' property and sealed up the subject property and called for a meeting with all the parties. Whilst the property was unlawfully sealed up, some thugs and hoodlums suspected to be the agents of the faction of the Oniyanru Family repeatedly vandalized our Clients' said property, particularly by removing and stealing the long-span aluminum roofing sheets of the multi-purpose industrial warehouses, resulting in its present deplorable state of ruins.

Our Clients pleaded with the erstwhile Chairman of the Lagos State Special Task Force on Land Grabbers to desist from the unlawful trespass and takeover of our Clients' property but the pleas fell on deaf ears. Hence, our Clients were left with no other option than to institute an action at the Lagos State high Court in **Suit No.: ID/773LMW/18 between Segun Kehinde Taylor and Ors V. The Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice Lagos and Anor.**

On 13th December 2019, the Lagos State Special Taskforce on Land Grabbers through the office of the Attorney General and Commissioner for Justice, Lagos State, having realized that the property rightfully and genuinely belongs to our Clients, agreed to and executed a Terms of Settlement with our Clients and thereafter handed the property back to our Clients. The said Terms of Settlement were subsequently entered as a Consent Judgment by the Hon. Justice O. A. Ogala

(Mrs.) sitting over the matter at the High Court of Lagos State, Ikeja Judicial Division on 18th December 2019.

Our Clients have since been in undisturbed possession of the subject property until they received a letter dated 18th May 2020 from the Lagos State Government but which was served on the property on 10th August 2022 (more than two years after a purported revocation order was obtained). The Lagos State Government, **having acknowledged our Clients' title and right of ownership of the subject property by entering into Terms of Settlement with them, which Terms were subsequently entered as a Consent Judgment by Hon. Justice O. A. Ogala (Mrs.) of the High Court of Lagos State, Ikeja Judicial Division on 18th December 2019**, has neglected, failed and/or refused to adequately compensate our Clients as stipulated in the said Judgment, which is the condition precedent for a notice of revocation/acquisition for any public purpose to be valid.

Furthermore, our Clients filed an action dated 17th August 2022 in **Suit No.ID/13980MFHR/2022 between Segun Kehinde Taylor and Anor vs The Lagos State Government and Ors at the High Court of Lagos State, Ikeja Judicial Division before Hon. Justice O.A. Okunuga (Mrs)** to set aside the Notice of Revocation dated 18th May 2020.

In the course of pursuing justice, the Lagos State Government presented several applications before the Court, challenging its jurisdiction to entertain the matter. These applications, which we deemed frivolous, were all dismissed by the Court.

Undeterred, the Lagos State Government, through the then Attorney General of Lagos State, M.J. Onigbanjo SAN, took an unconventional step. In a letter dated **14th March 2023**, they wrote to the Chief Judge, requesting that the matter be withdrawn from the Court. The stated reason was a desire to consolidate the matter with other pending cases, none of which had any direct connection to this case, which was instituted under the Fundamental Rights Enforcement Rules.

To our surprise and disappointment, the Chief Judge acceded to this request. However, nearly two years have passed since this decision, and the matter has yet to be reassigned to another judge. This prolonged inaction raises serious concerns about access to justice and the timely resolution of cases, especially those involving fundamental rights.

We call on the Lagos State Government to respect the rule of law and comply with the **Consent Judgment by Hon. Justice O. A. Ogala (Mrs.) of the High Court of Lagos State, Ikeja Judicial Division on 18th December 2019** which is subsisting and binding on



it by paying adequate compensation as required by laws or return the property to our client, the lawful owner of the property.



**Olalekan F. Ojo,
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Platinum and Taylor Hill LP
Counsel to the Taylor Family**

