

Olusegun Obasanjo

Agbe L'oba House, Quarry Road, Ibara
P.O. Box 2286, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

April 3, 2023

The Chief Clerk,
The Central Criminal Court,
Old Bailey,
London EC4M 7EH.

Dear Chief Clerk,

RE: IKE EKWEREMADU

I send you warmest greetings from Nigeria.

My dear Chief Clerk, may I seize this opportunity to commend your utmost dedication and resourcefulness which you have demonstrated with rare qualities of commitment and courage, while also upholding the cherished traditions of the Public Service. I am Olusegun Obasanjo, a soldier commissioned into the British Army of the West African Frontier Force in 1958, and rose to the rank of a full General in the Nigerian Army. I received the surrender of the Biafran Army at the end of the Nigerian civil war. I was military Head of State from 1976 to 1979 and elected President from 1999 to 2007.

It is with great pleasure that I write in respect of Senator Ike Ekweremadu, who I have known for over two decades. Within this period, I have followed and watched, with keen interest, Ike Ekweremadu's inspiring career which traversed private legal practice and public-administration. I recall, with fond memories, the beginnings of our political and social relationship at the outset of our collective quest for democratic rebirth for our fatherland. During my administration as a democratically-elected President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria between 1999 and 2007, Ike Ekweremadu and I had close relationship and interactions as staunch members of our political party, Peoples Democratic Party, PDP, and more so as he got elected into the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in 2003, of which he has since remained a member till date. Within this period of his service in the Nigerian Parliament, he has served as Deputy Senate President of the Senate and has headed so many Committees in various capacities and brought to bear his broad-based experience in legal practice and public administration. Sometime in 2009, he was appointed as the First Deputy Speaker of the Economic Community of West African States, ECOWAS, and made to lead ad hoc Committee to work for the return of constitutional order in the Niger Republic.

I clearly remember that in the heady days of the keen contest for the presidential ticket of our Party early 1999, he joined other well-meaning Nigerians from the South-Eastern part of Nigeria to set aside extraneous considerations and ensured that South East unanimously adopted me for the

Presidency. This was without regard to the fact that my closest competitor hailed from their part of the country. I truly cherish his God-fearing, dispassionate, moderate and pan-Nigerian approach to national issues and developments, in our multi-ethnic, multi-religious geo-polity. He dedicates himself to the service of God and humanity and he continues to play visible roles in national development. Through the Ikeoha Foundation, a non-governmental organization founded by him and his wife, in 1997, he and his wife have rendered a lot of charitable activities, enhancing poor people's access to quality education and healthcare and building their capacity to participate in mainstream social, political and economic activities of their communities. Ike Ekweremadu's conferment with the coveted national honour of Commander of the Federal Republic, CFR, is further testimony to his selfless service to our country, Nigeria.

Mr. Chief Clerk, I am very much aware of the current travails and conviction of Ike Ekweremadu and his wife in the United Kingdom resulting from their being charged with conspiring to arrange the travel of a 21-year old from Nigeria to the UK in order to harvest organs for their daughter. I do realise the implications of their action and I dare say, it is unpleasant and condemnable and can't be tolerated in any sane or civilized society. However, it is my fervent desire that for the very warm relations between the United Kingdom and Federal Republic of Nigeria; for his position as one of the distinguished Senators in the Nigerian Parliament, and also for the sake of their daughter in question whose current health condition is in danger and requires an urgent medical attention, you will use your good offices to intervene and appeal to the court and the government of the United Kingdom to be magnanimous enough to temper justice with mercy and let punishment that may have to come take their good character and parental instinct and care into consideration. I do hope Mr. and Mrs. Ekweremadu have learnt from this distressing experience of theirs to guide their future actions or inactions so they will continue to be outstanding members of their community and will continue to contribute fully to the good of the society in particular and the nation in general.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

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OLUSEGUN OBASANJO

Nigeria's Military Head of State (1976-1979)

President, Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999-2007)