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### ASSIGNMENT

## THE IMPACT OF THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC ON NIGERIA

The first confirmed case of the pandemic of coronavirus 2019 in Nigeria was announced on 27th February, 2020 when an Italian citizen in Lagos tested positive for the virus, caused by SARS-COV-2. On 4th March, 2020 a second case of the virus was reported in Ewekoro, Ogun State, a Nigerian citizen who had come into contact with the Italian citizen. On 28 January, 2020 the Federal Government of Nigeria assured citizens of the country of its readiness to strengthen surveillance at five international airports in the country to prevent the spread of coronavirus. The government announced the airports as Lagos, Rivers, Kano and the FCT Abuja. The Nigeria Centre for Disease Control also announced the same day that they had already set up a coronavirus group and was ready to activate its incident system if any case emerged in Nigeria.

It would be hell if the Covid-19 breaks out in Nigeria on the scale presently being witnessed in Europe and the US. Apart from the state of the healthcare system, 69 million Nigerians have no access to clean water. This invariably leads to water borne diseases like cholera, which can break out as regular epidemics. Social distancing and self isolation presuppose that people have enough space. In Lagos where we have over 20 slums, about 80 people can be found sharing a 10-room building with only two toilets and a bathroom being shared by all with no pipe-borne or treated water.

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Clearly the corona virus disease (COVID-19) that started out as an epidemic in Wuhan, China in December 2019 and ended up as a pandemic affecting the whole world, has thrown the whole world into a war-like situation. Scores of thousands of deaths have been recorded ~~sum~~ cumulatively for all countries across the world. Health systems in most countries are overwhelmed by the seriously sick patients in hospitals, many of whom are on ventilators and nursed in Intensive Care Units (ICU). Global and local economies stand at their worst in decades; the world economy is now declared to be in recession by the World Bank/IMF, and could eventually lead to the deepest depression witnessed so far.

The price of crude oil, the main stay of the Nigerian economy, tumbled like never before in the last 20 years. It went as low as below \$20 per barrel from above \$60 just before the pandemic. It has never been this bad in the last two decades and this has made a mess of the Nigerian federal government's budget estimates for 2020, making salaries payment, debt obligations and other projects uncertain. This is clearly so because the price of crude oil, which contributes over 90% of Nigeria's externally-generated revenue, now hovers around \$30 per barrel, which is far less than the budget's benchmark of \$57 per barrel, and this signifies tough times ahead.

Day by day the number of cases of the virus keeps on growing in Nigeria despite the imposed lockdown. This is due to the arrogance and ignorance of Nigerian citizens concerning the virus. People don't care what happens to them anymore, they all just want to step out of their houses. I'm suggesting that everyone stop being selfish and do what they can for the benefit of the entire country.

Aaron Abraham Dyem.