

## Corruption in Post-Independence Nigeria: Issues and Problems between 1999 - 2015

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### Abstract

*Every society faces challenges peculiar to its environment and circumstances; Nigeria is no exception. Some of its challenges include corruption and insecurity. These seem to have eaten deep into the fabric of the Nigerian society such that Nigeria is ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world. Unfortunately, while corruption affects national development; it has serious implications for national security and this is the problem citizens and governments are facing in the country today. Previous civilian administrations of President Olusegun Obasanjo and subsequent Nigerian Presidents tried to confront corruption head-on by using different strategies since 1999. Yet the battle is not over. This paper examines the crusade against corruption in the country between 1999-2015 and how it could be tackled, the impact of corruption on national security and development; challenges of the anti-corruption measures and the way forward. The work uses two principal sources broadly categorized as primary and secondary sources of data, and uses descriptive and analytical methods.*

## Introduction

Nigeria as a nation was the dream of our founding fathers since independence, to one day become a nation that will rise to the forefront of global excellence. Perhaps, for Nigeria to achieve this dream, it will have to make lots of positive changes in national life. Not changes for the sake of change only, but changes that are earnest and honest for the purpose of upholding, and preserving the best ideals, values, and enabling environment for Nigeria and its people to excel in every aspect of human endeavor. Nigeria is blessed with abundant human and natural resources; with huge deposits of petroleum, tin, columbine, natural gas, and hydro electric energy amongst others. Nigeria made huge supplies of food exports to many of its neighboring countries as well to Europe, America, and South East Asian countries most of who depended on Nigeria's agricultural produce. The nation also made huge food donations to countries affected by natural disasters such as droughts or wars.<sup>1</sup>

To realize our founding fathers' dream, great projects and plans were on line after independence to transform Nigeria into a developed nation. However, corrupt practices ensued and disorganized the various facets of the Nigerian polity. The interest for personal wealth building replaced the concern for nation building. Building financial pyramids from state or nation resources became a common practice among corrupt citizens. Today in Nigeria, the power of money has become the power of all powers. The quest for foreign accounts is a race among many Nigerians; this made corrupt practice like money laundry a common act in Nigeria, that even those with legitimate wealth also expatriate money which would have been used to develop the country into foreign financial institutions for the ownership of luxury houses or hotel suites in Europe and America. Corrupt practices; consequently take out heavy amounts of money from the treasury of Nigeria, looted wealth is hardly ever invested in Nigeria rather it is kept in foreign bank accounts and foreign financial institutions or businesses with little or no profits accruing to the nation. Today, this giant phenomenon has affected both those who are responsible for siphoning money and the innocent. It has also affected those in government and those in other sectors, giving rise to poor accountability and transparency.

The issue of rapid increase of corruption is troubling, and the damage it has done to the polity is astronomical, leading to developmental setbacks in Nigeria. Corruption has been the greatest challenge of governance, socio-economic, and political ills that have affected effective development and security in Nigeria. Although, corruption is not limited to Nigeria,

but widespread across Africa, its causes and consequences seems to have remained one of the most important problems to the process of development and national security. Even though, legal and constitutional machineries like Government establishments or agencies/institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have been established by the past and present government to combat corruption, yet it has been a persistent problem and a serious threat to national security and nation building. Many factors are responsible for this, among which perhaps, is the failure of government and the bodies charged with the responsibility of combating corruption.

Since independence, corruption has been an issue of national concern in Nigeria. This has posed threats not only to national security but to our political and socio-economic developments. There can never be development if the issue of corruption is not properly addressed, and if there is no development, the nation's security is at stake. The paper examine issues and problems of corruption from 1999 to 2015, it looks at the concept corruption, what acts constitutes corruption, how it has become part of our national life, the evil and effects of corruption on development and security, the crusade against corruption within the period under examination, and the way forward.

### **Conceptual clarification and common acts of corruption**

Corruption has received varied definitions, but for the purpose of this paper a few are considered. Corruption has been defined as a perversion, a change from good to bad. It means the perversion of integrity of state of affairs through bribery, favour, or moral depravity. Thus, when two or more persons have interacted to change the structure or processes of society or the behavior of functionaries in order to produce dishonest, unfaithful or defiled situations, we say it is corruption.<sup>2</sup> Corruption involves the injection of additional but improper transactions aimed at changing the normal course of events and altering judgments and positions of trust. It consists in the "doers" and "receivers" use of informal extra-legal or illegal acts to facilitate matters.<sup>3</sup>

Corruption is an act which deviates from official duties of a public role for personal gains. This includes behaviours such as bribery, nepotism, and misappropriation of public resources for private uses.<sup>4</sup> Jibrin M. Waziri, argues that the absence of morality and anti-social behaviour conferring improper benefits contrary to legal and moral norms is corruption. <sup>5</sup> These undermine the authorities to improve the living conditions of the people, because the money might for that is diverted for personal use.

In most African countries especially Nigeria, corruption is the fastest means of accumulation of illegal wealth. It has resulted in growing poverty and misery among Nigerians. These definitions with the Nigerian corruption problem, one would consider adequate and appropriate, because corruption is seen by those involved in corrupt practices as the easy way of amassing wealth in Nigeria and nothing seems wrong with that.

### **The most common acts that constitute corruption in Nigeria**

We need to identify and explain acts that constitute corruption in Nigeria. These acts sound different but similar in practice as they are all referred to corruption. Such acts amongst others include fraud, Bribery, extortion, embezzlement, money laundering, and favouritism.

- a. Fraud; involves intrigues, deceit, counterfeiting; smuggling and forgery of different kinds.
- b. Bribery; a kind of relationship that involve giving and taking in payment. For example, kickbacks, pay-off, gratuities, etc.
- c. Extortion; is the unlawful demand or receipt of property, money or sensitive information through the use of force or threat. A typical example of extortion in Nigeria is when the armed police or military men demand money for passage through a roadblock. In fact, the police and custom personnel are the main example of extortion in Nigeria.
- d. Embezzlement; to take for personal use money or property that has been given on trust by others, without the knowledge or permission, in other words misuse of entrusted money or property.
- e. Favouritism; an application of a selfish and biased ways of distributing resources. Sometimes this is done in favour of friends, family or very close relations to the detriment of those who have no godfather. For example, most regimes give the Bureaucrats the opportunity of practicing nepotism on a grand scale by giving contracts to people who came from their villages, tribes and clans while more capable contractors from other places are denied contracts.

- f. Money laundering: involves the depositing and transferring of money and proceeds of illegal activities to legitimize these proceeds all these acts constitute corruption and very common in Nigeria, that we need strict measures to curtail or stop it, if the country must develop in every aspect requires for nation building or development. Corruption in Nigeria is pervasive and more or less institutionalized. It includes the entire spectrum of people, from the highest officers to the lowest. In 1964, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe told Nigerians that tribalism, nepotism, perfidy and corruption were the enemies of Nigeria and if allow to increase; the personality of our nation decomposes and stinks. 6 Chuba Okadigbo, in the Daily Times of October, 16, 1987 graphically presented the vicious circle of bribery in Nigeria when he writes that:

Bribe the messenger, if you may see his boss. Bribe the clerk, if your file may move up. Bribe the chief clerk, if you want a form. Bribe the Executive, if you want to be considered for a job or a contract. Bribe the Permanent Secretary, if you may be shortlisted for contracting. Bribe the Minister when you get the award and pay some advance bribe before you get that contract. Bribe the customs man, if your goods may be cleared. Bribe the police man, if you may ride on the streets with your ware. Bribe the investigator, if he inquires about your goods, when stolen. Bribe the Prosecutor to facilitate the trial of the thief. Bribe the jailer to make sure he stands in jail and pays his due as thought fit by the state and so many others.<sup>7</sup>

Of course, corruption in its various manifestations is not a new problem in Nigeria. The Political Bureau Report (1987) note that; Corruption has become a household word in the Nigerian society from the highest level of political and business elites to the ordinary person in the village. Its multi-various manifestations include the inflation of government contracts in return for kickbacks, frauds and falsification of account in the public service, educational institutions including Universities, the taking of bribes and perversion of justice among the police, the judiciary and other organs for administering justices and the hideous crimes against the state in the business and industrial sectors of our economy in collusion, with multinationals such as through over-invoicing of goods, foreign exchange swindling,

hoarding and smuggling. The above profile of corruption illustrates how it has been institutionalized in Nigeria, and has become part of Nigerians.

### **Corruption a threat to security, socio-political and economic development**

Today, many political office holders acquire wealth and riches within and outside Nigeria; display this wealth beyond their means. This makes politics a do or die affair in Nigeria, because anything spent to secure a political office is regarded as an investment, which matures immediately one gets into office.<sup>8</sup> Corruption has given a death blow and an incalculable damage to our economy development, thus posing threats to national security. Development projects for example, roads, and refineries, are usually poorly executed because of bribery, 'kick-backs' and 'percentage'. Corruption is a major obstacle in the development of Nigeria.<sup>9</sup> Corruption constitutes the greatest wastage of human and national resources in any society, so allowing it, will amount to poverty and economic setback.

The effects of corruption on a nation's security, socio-political and economic development are too numerous to count and very diverse. The effects of corruption on growth, is in part, a result of reduced level of investment; this acts to investment risk. The government spends money on items and giant projects, this creates room for graft. Corrupt government officials capitalized on these and shift expenditures to areas in which they can collect bribes easily. Fraud is easily seen in the large projects which are badly managed. Projects are embarked upon in Nigeria to justify the corrupt expenses on them.

The quality of goods and services available to the public is reduced as a result of corruption. Corruption slows the pace for investment, economic growth and government expenditure choice; it also reduces private investment. Bribery, and corruption scare away European investors from Nigeria because it affects their security. The culture of late payments, delays or refusal of payment for services already done affects cash flow for individuals and companies which is their life blood. And such acts are corruption and the price of corruption is poverty.<sup>10</sup> And because of the widespread of "petty" and "grand" the international business community regards the whole of Africa as a "sinkhole that swallows their money with little or no return."<sup>11</sup> With the political and economy changes, Nigeria and Africa at large would have attracted foreign investors if not for its bribery and corruption culture, and has created fears and made the areas unsafe for investment.

Corruption leads to aid forfeit. Some foreign donors do not give financial aid to corrupt nations. For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has withdrawn development aid from some nations that are perpetually corrupt. More so, other organization such as the Council of Europe and the Organization of American States are taking harsh and tough measures against international corruption. 12 Corruption destabilizes our socio-political system, leading to social and political crises and military coup and coup d'etat. In the light of this, corruption in Nigeria needs wilful and urgent attention if we must develop and enjoy national security in every aspect of human life in Nigeria.

### **Corruption and anti-corruption crusade in Nigeria**

The assessment of corruption in Nigeria indicates some reasons why corruption still remains pandemic in spite of the anti-corruption crusade. All measures against corruption have not been fruitful in Nigeria because they have operated at a level of symbolism. Those waging the corruption wars are themselves corrupt. Some of the corrupt leaders still find it difficult to change the moral tone of the country. Government domination of the economic sphere significantly enhances opportunities and ability to seek rents. Civil Society also still accepts or tolerates corruption. Entrenched and institutionalized phenomenon of the country, and the failure of law enforcement agencies, workforce, delay of trial and slow pace of proceedings in our courts, constitutes constraints, and therefore, makes the war against corruption cumbersome.

Combating corruption has been a major problem and concern in Nigeria even before 1999. The problems and issues of corruption still need to be given attention to this day. Corruption is a major challenge to the development of any nation wither it is a developed or developing nation. However, the impact of corruption is particularly tragic in the case of the poorest people in developing countries like Nigeria and others. There are numerous institutions established by different governments before 1999 and after, to fight corruption but the problems and issues arising from corruption in Nigeria still remain unsolved.

It is evident that corruption in Nigeria has far reaching implications on the democratization and economic processes since 1999. With the re-emergence of democracy in Nigeria, the people of Nigeria have developed confidence in the new political leadership, but unfortunately, the political class seems to have institutionalized corruption which on several occasions led to the crises of governance in Nigeria. It is recounted that, from 1999-2015,

several allegations have been raised against politicians because of corruption in terms of money laundering and financial misappropriation among others.

By 1999 when Nigeria returned to civilian rule, several anti-corruption initiatives were established. The leadership aimed at tackling the menace of corruption by establishing institutions and laws like the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (NEITI), the Money Laundering Act in 2004, institution of the Due Process Mechanism in the public procurements, the Freedom of Information Act 2011. These institutions without any delay picked the bull by the horn in fighting corruption. Some of these related cases of corruption handled by the Anti-Crime Institution are highlighted in this paper. For instance, the EFCC between 2003 and 2010 has taken 700 cases to court, with a record of over 400 convictions, assets worth \$1trillion forfeited, while some cases were still pending before the court and has till 2010 recovered over \$6.5billion. This surpasses the ICPC's 241 persons prosecuted in 127 cases from inception in 2001 to 2007.<sup>13</sup>

As at 2001, about N84 billion was recovered from the family of the late Head of State, General Sani Abacha. Between May, 2003 and June 2004, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) in Nigeria recovered money and assets from crime of over \$700 million as well recovering of £3million arising from a bank fraud in Brazil in 2005.<sup>14</sup> More importantly, it has been observed that in Nigeria, corruption has led to bad governance, mismanagement swallowed about 40 percent of Nigeria's \$20 billion annual oil income. Corruption diminishes national prestige and respect, leads to brain drain, civil unrest, business failure and unemployment, election rigging, absence of law and order and failure of government institutions.<sup>15</sup> All these are public money diverted and directed to private use. Obviously, this constitutes a big loss of money that could have been either channelled into the economy to generate more wealth or used for providing public services before its loot and discovery.

The implication of corruption in Nigeria is that persistent increase in corrupt practices has to an extent given rise to increasing poverty, crimes and instability posing threats to security and making development virtually stagnated, because no nation would develop under the atmosphere of corruption. O. Oyewole, Observed that corruption generates economic distortions in the public sector by diverting public investment into capital projects or contracts, where bribes and kickbacks are given or taken. He maintains that, officials may

increase the technical complexity of public sector projects to conceal or pave way for such dealings, this further distort investment.<sup>16</sup> In support to Oyewole, here is a typical example, the Idris Kuta panel was set by the Senate in the year 2000 to probe contract awards in the Senate indicted the then leadership of the upper legislative arm headed by Okadigbo. Okadigbo is said to have approved the sum of N37.2 million to himself as furniture grant without recourse to tenders board, and also engaged four contractors, who tendered N11 billion estimates for the construction of office complexes without any designs, a project not contained in the 2000 annual budget, which later got 70 million approved as consultancy fee. N200 million meant for press center was diverted and disbursed to senators. N22.9 million and N16.9 million were allocated to Okadigbo and his Deputy Haruna Abubakar. Also a contract for street- lighting from the Eagles Square to National Assembly (one kilometre) initially estimated at N57 million and to be executed by the Federal Capital Development Agency ( FCDA) was re-awarded for N175 million to unregistered companies owned by some Senators and Officers of the National Assembly, the million was shared among the Senators<sup>17</sup>.

Corruption in Nigeria seems to like a relay where a contestant hands over the baton to another. There is no government since 1999 to date that did not and still struggling with corruption. For instance, Nigeria was still bedevilled with corruption under the administration of President Jonathan Goodluck, which the crusade started with his predecessor the late President Umaru Musa Yar'adua, In 2013, a report in one of the dailies stated that Nigerian Leaders from 2000 to 2010 have stolen 3.047 trillion Naira placing the country 7th in the World's Money Laundering Index.<sup>18</sup> The Nigeria's Corruption Perception Index has at that time remained higher under this democratic governance according to the rating by Transparency International between 1999 and 2010.

Corruption appears to encourage unnecessary waste, divert resources and sustains ineffectiveness. In Nigeria, more than \$4000 billion has been reportedly stolen from the treasury by leaders in Nigeria between 1970 and 2007. With the return to civil rule in 1999, the program of stealing by the ruling class seems to have exploded like bush fire.<sup>19</sup> There are several incidences of contract scam and bribery that led to abandoned projects both at the local, state and federal level. It is observed that in spite of over N85 trillion realized between 1999 and 2008, through unprecedented oil receipts, the states and federal government cannot fix collapsing and decaying infrastructures,<sup>20</sup> not to talk of introducing new ones.

Different frauds were investigated by ICPC. In August 2009, the ICPC as part of its responsibilities to fight corruption investigated an alleged N90 billion frauds levelled against managers of the Pension Fund for retirees in the health sector. In September 2009, the ICPC summoned officials of the Ministry of Education linked with alleged mismanagement of N1 billion meant for the Education Reform Programme. The same commission on April, 26, 2010, charged the chairman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), Chief Vincent Ogbulafor in an Abuja High Court for having allegedly conspired with four others to defraud the Federal Government of N2.3 billion in 2001.<sup>21</sup>

The achievements of the anti-corruption initiatives of the Fourth Republic, the ICPC and EFCC worth commending, Nuhu Ribadu, the then Chairman of the EFCC opines, as reported in the Punch newspaper of 30th June, 2006, “the EFCC had recovered \$5 billion from the perpetrators of advance fee fraud (419), money laundering and other financial crimes since 2003, recovered \$150 million from former Inspector-General of Police, Mr. Tafa Balogun and recovered and returned \$100 million to Brazil”.<sup>22</sup>

All these corrupt practices had been ranked and scored by the Corruption Perception Index. For instance, in 2011 Corruption Perception Index, Nigeria was ranked 143rd out of 183 surveyed countries in the world. Likewise in 2012, Nigeria was ranked 139th out of 176 countries with 27 points and in 2013, 144th out of 177 countries surveyed with 25 points. These are clear indications that Nigeria was still wallowing in corruption and the institutions established to fight corruption are also up to task in combating the menace of corruption. It is evident during the President Muhammadu Buhari’s government in 2015 who attempts a serious search for money looters in the then government. The Buhari’s government introduced the “whistleblowers” approach to fighting corruption whereby, any information on money looters would have a percentage of the unveiled amount. The Leadership newspaper on Monday, February 2, 2015 carried an alleged stolen money to the tune of N30 trillion under the watch of the then finance minister, Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala. The money was missed, stolen or mismanaged under the minister of finance, what the CBN governor that time described as the mismanagement of the economy under watch.<sup>23</sup>

Nigeria under democratic government elect should be of good governance, but there seems to be widespread consensus that the present development crisis in Nigeria is strongly correlated with governance and corruption problems. This paper argues that; the development of crisis in Nigeria and Africa at large, forms major part of the debate that necessitated the

use of the terms “good governance”. “Good governance” model was used by the World Bank as a response to gross mismanagement by African leaders which seems to be a major cause of development crisis. In fact, democracy under good governance with political will would reduce corruption and reposition the economy for sustainability.

### **Tackling corruption and the way forward**

For effective growth and development, nation-building, and to promote national security, there is the need to combat corruption. Corruption has been a major problem since independence in Nigeria that would require many doses of medical for its therapy. To tackle corruption, a single and simple remedy will not achieve it. Nigeria has in theory, and the solutions in the books to tackle corruption, but like poverty bedeviling the nation, implementations of the laws are the Achilles heel (a vulnerable point) of the society.<sup>24</sup> The following are require as the means for tackling corruption and way forward:

### **Government must take the lead**

War against corruption at all levels in the country can only be successful if governments are prepared to take stern and honest measures against the evil. Any government that means to succeed must first rid itself of corruption. Despite the measures earlier discussed which are all very important in the fight against corruption, the key factor to workable measures is having honest leaders with the political will to tackle corruption. If there is an absence of political will at the top, there will be a general lack of commitment to enforce laws and punish the corrupt. Almost all national anti-corruption commissions point to political as the main precondition for their effective operation. Sometimes political will is real and sincere; sometimes it manifests itself as merely proclamations and slogans to attract voters. Exposing the danger of corruption and mounting public and civil society pressure can help generate political will and indeed even contribute to a change of government, as it happened in 2015 general election in Nigeria. Corrupt government functionaries in all agencies must be brought to book in accordance with the law of the land. There is no doubt that corrupt leadership can neither invokes the enthusiasm nor unleashes the energies of the masses for a rapid development. Corruption breeds disrespect and lack of faith in leadership. For Solarin, T., leadership as generally taken in Nigeria rather than a sacrifice, it means deprivation, licentiousness, luxury, gluttony and unbridleness.<sup>25</sup> The nation's future should be focus on the leaders, put its; our rulers must also be leaders and should live by clear moral principles. With the government now occupying a high moral ground, it can successfully

implement stringent anti-corruption legislation throughout the society. Before any real social and economic progress can be made, there must be the rule of law which is binding on all. It is argued, “for that state in which the law is subject and has no authority, I perceived it to be on the high-way to ruin: but I see that the state in which the law is above the rulers, and rulers are inferiors of the laws is preserved”.<sup>26</sup>

There can never be meaningful development and security if corruption is not tackled and if our leaders who are the arrow-head in the fight against corruption are corrupt. Introducing transparency and accountability in government functions, particularly in all financing transactions would help fight corruption.

### **The Need for Re-orientation of National Value**

The mere institutionalization of probe panels and ad hoc Commissions cannot effectively control the menace of corruption in Nigeria; rather, Nigerians should be re-oriented to a better value system. This should be, because Nigerians for long have been living on the survival of the fittest and grab whatever, comes one's mentality and way. Man is a moral being, and as a nation we must exploit this capacity for good in man for our development. The re-orientation of the youth in this country Nigeria to a good moral value system could help in the war against corruption. We must use every means at our disposal, education, religion, the press, and the law courts, to bring the issues of morality and good value to the fore-front of our consciousness. Preaching the gospel and practice of virtue is the ultimate solution to behavioural change and reduction in corruption. There is the need for enlightenment in discouraging wrong values and promoting good values in Nigeria. More so, the basic function of religion to teach morality that is ignored should be reinforced.

### **Ensuring a better national economy**

A sound economy is a long-term solution to the menace of corruption, and excessive materialism and the tradition of get rich quick, should be discouraged even at family level. A sound economy will open avenues and opportunities for the people. Industries will provide employment for the people, especially the youths who are the engine for national development in every society. Reasonable salaries can be afforded by the government and private employers, and many more individuals can profitably take initiatives and become self-employed. Periodic review of public servants pay package is a necessity. Well paid staff would most likely be effective and free from the temptation of being corrupt. Improved

economy system, with people gainfully employed and with a sense of security, there will be little incentive for crime and corruption.

### **A clearly redefined national policies and objectives**

If corrupt wealth is treated with the contempt it deserves and no chance is given to the corrupt person to enjoy his ill-gotten wealth, this would make people think twice before indulging in corrupt practices. To destroy corruption we must remove the psychological incentive to corruption. Individualistic acquisitive instinct without a sense of social or civic responsibility, there must be a national objective to have a clear idea of what kind of a society we want to build and how to achieve it. Emphasis should be on good and enforceable policies toward controlling corrupt behaviour. The policies should be periodically reviewed to close-check any loophole and to meet up with the changing society like Nigeria.

### **The reconstitution of a responsible press/media**

The press does not have the unfettered freedom to operate. The press must be given unfettered freedom not only to expose corruption wherever it is found, but even after exposing it. The media is perhaps the most effective tool in fighting corruption, other sectors might be slow, but public outcry against an outrage that has been exposed is instantaneous, its only public pressure capable of changing behavioural patterns. Not even totalitarian regimes can withstand the weight of public opinion. The press, if best equipped would mould public opinion against corruption, and promote development. Public institutions should be used for public enlightenment programmes to get people to ask the right questions and get the right answers. There is the need for government to create more anti-corruption agencies with full mandate to operate without interference so as to make them effective. More so, adequate resources to fund and operate the agencies should be made available. This will enable the anti-corruption power and authority to withstand any pressure and opposing force from the elements that are corrupt in Nigeria.

### **The police**

The police generally, are perceived by the public as abusing their positions for personal gain. By virtue of their public role need to be well paid, trained and equipped and involved in the fight against corruption. As part of the measures to curb corruption by the police there is the need to create the structure and systems to manage information and secure knowledge to prevent and challenge unethical behaviour, and developing proactive tactics

and techniques to identify and detect corruption and other dishonest behaviours. The police should be able to protect whistle-blowers, and other groups that expose corrupt practices in Nigeria.

### **The judiciary**

The judiciary must be depoliticized. Judges' independence should not be infringed either by the government or individuals. For example, engaging judges in election commissions before and during elections can infringe their neutrality. There is the need to improve the financial status and security of the judges to free them from economic temptation and loss of integrity in the society. If judges have low salaries, poor incentives and privileges, the temptation to accept bribes to improve their economy for better livelihood increases. So for an effective fight to curb corruption, the judges who are expected to dispense justice in trying corrupt cases or practices must be treated as spelt out above, and accorded freedom for justice to take place.

### **Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)**

Anti-corruption efforts should not only be the government, but should involve responsible Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs), in the local and international communities. The NGOs should be made and seen as part of the solution to corruption and not part of corruption. Involving the NGOs in the anti-corruption crusade, can on some occasion increase the transparency of government actions, create awareness and even force necessary legislative and regulatory change. Because any NGOs that are sincere in the fight against corruption cannot under any circumstances, use corrupt channels to influence or achieve a goal to the detriment of the country.

### **Conclusion**

Nigeria is still struggling with the dilemma of corruption that has largely retarded social development, undermined economic growth, discouraged foreign investments and reduced the resources available for infrastructural development, public service, and poverty reduction programs. Corruption is a single most important factor responsible for the failure of governance and lack of sustainable socio-economic development in Nigeria. Though, Nigeria is blessed with good initiatives, laws written and unwritten to fight corruption. What remains and very important is the political will to fight corruption. Corrupt leaders cannot wage an effective war against corruption and if that is not done, there can never be security and

development. It is in the rules and practices of government that the foundations of security and sustainable development are shaped not undermined.

Good governance, good political will, transparency, accountability and the rule of law are the major keys to tackling corruption in every society. The basis of our national security, political and socio-economic development becomes compromised when these rules and practices are not effectively monitored and applied. There can never be security as well development if the governance allows abuse of resources and the diversion of resources that are meant for public use to private use by corrupt individuals, political title holders, politicians and their collaborators.

Importantly, Nigerian Youths are the engine of any national development, and should be empowered economically to avoid security dangers or threats. If corruption must be overcome, and if we can solve the problem of corruption in Nigeria, 70 percent of our problems would be considered solved. In view of this, individuals, stakeholders, well meaning Nigerians, and the present administration should earnestly and honestly fight corruption to a stop. To make the vision of war against corruption realistic, it means the war against corruption is for every individual to fight headlong until corruption is crushed.

Consequently, it is imperative for Nigeria to produce leaders who must look beyond self interest and are ready to use the rule of law and good governance to enhance the issue of social justice. Our leaders must be able to multi-task in the areas of fighting corruption as they simultaneously create more industries, jobs, and provide social security to their citizens. There is the need for government, employers, stakeholders, and workers to sit together and fine-tune the existing processes that will lead to the creation of decent jobs for the people. Also the monies recovered from looters as a result of the anti-corruption efforts, should be channelled towards the development of agriculture and improve infrastructures for better livelihood of all Nigerians.

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