



CENTER FOR FISCAL TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY WATCH

MONTHLY TRANSPARENCY WATCH



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INTRODUCTION

Our dear reader,

Welcome to the first edition of our Monthly Transparency Watch for the year. The year is just starting and for us at the Center, we are poised to consolidate our efforts in 2022 towards ensuring that transparency and accountability are entrenched in the nation's public service to the effect that public sector corruption is reduced to the barest minimum.

One of the major areas of our interventions is countering organized crime. Given the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency's role in this regard, the Center was received in audience by its secretary to forge partnership that would promote advocacy against illicit substance abuse and trading. You would find this piece of news in this edition of our newsletter.

As an active player in strengthening the nation's anti-corruption environment, you would find stories of our participation in workshops, policy dialogue, and the launch of the 2022 Corruption Perception Index (CPI). It's the position of the Center that stakeholders must work together to support Nigeria in achieving its developmental potential by improving on several barometers and indexes that promote good governance.

As we head towards the 2023 general election, the Center seizes this opportunity to call on electorate to jettison primordial sentiments and choose leaders that would fight corruption and inspire hope in a better Nigeria. On our part, and as part of our advocacies to promote transparency and the integrity of our electoral democracy in line with the Center's "Electoral Financing Project," our first twitter spaces conversation addressed the ongoing campaign of calumny by politicians, and monetization of the process. You can access the conversation on our twitter spaces @FTransparency.

We do hope that you would find this edition interesting.

Victor Agi
Head, Public Relations

Countering Organized Crime Center Forges Partnership with NDLEA to Expand Advocacies

Received in audience by the Secretary, Shadrach Usman Haruna, the Center has forged a partnership with the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to further its efforts to counter organized crime in Nigeria through sustained advocacies and deploying of technological solutions.

Amb. Angela Nworgu, while speaking during the visit, said that the NDLEA is a strategic agency in the fight against one of Nigeria's prevalent crimes and acknowledged the Agency's preventive measures in winning the battle against drug trafficking and related crimes. She therefore sought collaboration with the Agency to further drive advocacy in countering organized crimes across the country.

While explaining the Center's efforts in countering organized crimes including developing a portal that hosts useful information, the Executive Director, Mr. Umar Yakubu added the website would have automated visualizations of real-time

insights on organized crime across the country that would provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues, thereby allowing for more informed decision-making by relevant stakeholders to prevent occurrence.

Umar also noted that the Center in recognition of the need to be more inclusive in the fight against organized crime, has also developed a tool for youth with emphasis on youth corps members and secondary school students to take voluntary aptitude tests on Organized Crimes such as drug trafficking, financial crimes, arms trafficking, human trafficking, environmental crimes, among others. The tool is a valuable resource for young citizens to inculcate the right values and create awareness on the effects of organized crime on self and national development.

Read more here :
<https://www.fiscaltransparency.org/countering-organized-crime-center-forges-partnership-with-ndlea-to-expand-advocacies/>



Implementation of Anti-Corruption Commitments

Center Joins Stakeholders at ANEEJ Policy Dialogue

The policy dialogue, organized by the African Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ), was to present and review the nation's implementation of anti-corruption commitments, including the implementation of the London Anti-corruption Summit and the Global Forum for Asset Recovery (GFAR).

It was observed that while the nation continues to make progress theoretically, there's work to be done to effectively mobilize stakeholders' actions toward the implementation of relevant laws and international commitments. The enactment of the Proceed of Crimes Act (POCA) for instance, provided a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for the nation's asset recovery regime, and it is hoped that anti-corruption and law enforcement agencies would improve their current efforts on asset recovery.

To improve the asset recovery regime, the workshop especially noted and recommended that ACAs should publish disaggregated data of assets and other relevant information to improve transparency, which should be made accessible on their websites. Also, to boost the fight against corruption, the dialogue called for expedited actions toward the passage of the Whistle Blowing (Protection) and Audit legislation.

On their part, the dialogue noted that the role of civil society organizations should be better mainstreamed, so actors would be seen as playing complementary, rather than antagonizing government efforts.

The Center, as part of its efforts at ensuring the proper institutionalization and implementation of the recently passed anti-corruption Acts, including the POCA, the Center would continue to build the capacity of stakeholders towards strengthening the nation's anti-corruption environment.



Nigeria and Transparency International 2022 Corruption Perception Index



The Center joined other stakeholders at the release of the 2022 Corruption Perception Index (CPI), a global instrument for measuring corruption perception in about 180 countries. The result showed that Nigeria scored 24, the same points with last year's, but the country has moved 4 places up from 154th in 2021 to 150th position out of 180.

From the analysis of this year's report as presented by Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani), the Executive Director of the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), some major factors led to the country's performance. These weaknesses include recorded cases of oil theft which plagued the country's revenue with not much done to curb it, the opaqueness of the subsidy regime, lack of transparency and accountability in the nation's security architecture. He added that the failure and lack of transparency in the constituency project implementation, and judicial bottlenecks challenges are among the weaknesses that contributed to the nation's poor performance in the two (2) consecutive years in the CPI ranking.

It's the position of the Center that stakeholders must work together to support Nigeria in achieving its developmental potentials by improving on several barometers and indexes that promote good governance.

In our work to promote transparency and combat corruption, more attention must be paid to strengthening institutions and systems to function effectively without interference. Transparency is also a strong component in addressing some of the gaps identified by TI. Citizens should continue to engage government at all levels in demanding accountability and transparency. In the same vein, the independence of our anti-corruption institutions should be upheld in order for them to discharge their duties without fear or favour. Finally, attention should be paid to reforming and strengthening the nation's judiciary for swift and efficient administration of justice.

Campaigns of Calumny, Monetization and Integrity of Nigeria's Electoral Democracy

By Victor Agi

The world renowned political scientist and communications theorist Harold Lasswell referred to politics as “who gets what, when and how.” Politics for him, is a way of determining, without recourse to violence, who gets power or controls state's resources, and how they get them.

The “how” in Lasswell's definition speaks to the place of “influence” in winning elections, and influence is naturally required to wield state power. Two important tools of influence, howbeit unconventional, in politics that further explain how power is captured are money; in which case, we have seen the continuous monetization of the electoral process by the political class. The second tool is to resort to extreme measures to demarket their political opponents hoping that the strategy would increase their own prospects at the poll.

Across the globe, money remains an integral part of democracy, as it is needed to conduct elections, lobby for electoral positions, and actually win elections. This features in advanced, developing and nascent democracies. Indeed, democracy as a system of government whose pillar is electioneering can indeed be expensive. Financial resources are required for the effective functioning of a democratic system. This applies to all systems but more prevalent in the presidential system which involves the conduct of general elections every four years. At every election cycle, politicians under the umbrella of political parties engage in series of activities to convince the populace to vote for their candidates. The logistics and process of campaigning for votes in a presidential election for instance require the use of large sums of money, and this is why measures are provided by laws on fundraising for political office aspirants in all democracies.

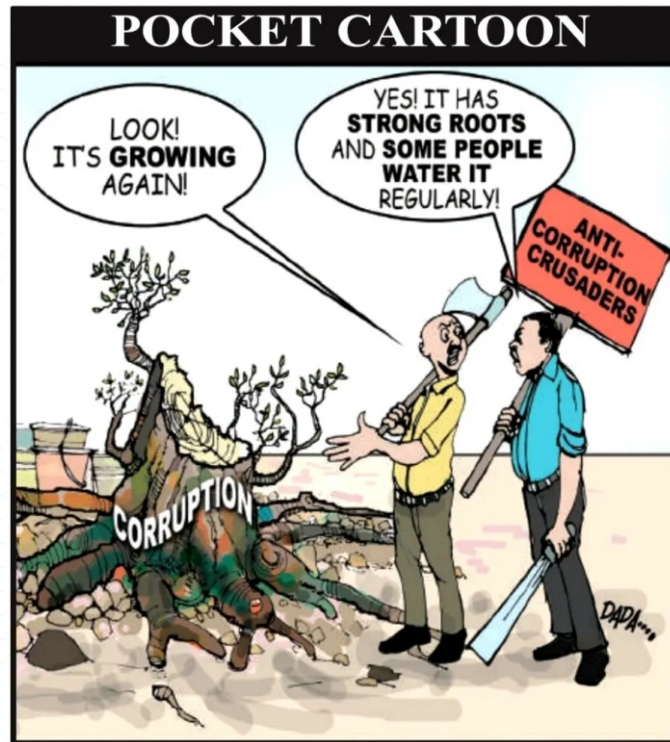
Despite the relevance of money in politics, excessive and unregulated use for elections is capable of eroding the integrity of political processes and institutions, jeopardizing the quality of electoral democracy. In the United States for instance, the influence of big donors in the electioneering process continues to be a subject of public conversation, and there are clamors to limit campaign financing,

improve transparency, and enforcement of rules. The same is true in South Africa which led to a law requiring the identities of donors. Regulating the spending of the Election Management Body (EMB), political parties and candidates is therefore pertinent for promoting integrity, transparency, and accountability of the democratic process, as unregulated use of money undermines democratic principles, bestows unfair disadvantage on electorates and wrongly modifies their available choices, denying the people quality representatives in the final analysis.

The other unconventional tool of access for people seeking power that has crept into our system is resorting to the use of extreme measures including campaigns of calumny against opposition candidates in order to reduce their electoral value to one's advantage. Politicians see politics as a game largely driven by personal interest against a call to service. Politicians operating this tool have competitive tendencies, and are as well driven by the urge to occupy political positions in order to control the resources of the state by all means. It's mostly about access to resources and not for national service. Hence, it's a political ideology that leans on the ends and not the process.

In the run-up to the 2023 general elections, the political campaigns are already saturated with all kinds of manipulations, fake and unsubstantiated media narratives, and character assassinations to project one candidate as a better choice over the other. Unfortunately, this trend in our political history has shifted our campaigns from an issue-based process to some jamboree gatherings intended to excite supporters and further impoverish the masses through sharing of peanuts to buy over voters.

Read full article as published by Daily Post here: <https://dailypost.ng/2023/01/30/by-victor-agi-campaigns-of-calumny-monetization-and-integrity-of-nigerias-electoral-democracy/>



Source: Vanguard Newspaper

STOP CORRUPTION

Stop corruption please,
It's a contagious disease,
That not only affects the persons,
But also the whole nation.

Corruption is like cancer,
Spreading from one part to another,
And its movement is so fast,
That almost nothing's left to be done at last.

The apparent patriots like the scared birds,
Fly away to the distant lands,
In search of a secured,
And better life indeed.

If anyone dares to stand against corruption,
The ones suffering from the very pollution,
Throw him in the jail,
Or bury under the soil.

As the sunset lets the dawn to appear,
We shouldn't let our dreams expire,
Since the expected moment isn't far away,
Only you and I can bring that day.

@Md. Ziaul Haque



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