



SUPPORTED BY:
MacArthur
Foundation

August 2023 Edition

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	-02
Countering Organized Crime Project: Center Visits INTERPOL, Seeks Collaboration to Stem Tide	-03
Some Sights and Scenes from West Africa Civil Society Week'23	-04
Consumer Rights Protection: Center Urges the Deployment of Technology to Facilitate Resolution of Complaints	-05
Fiscal Transparency: Center Commends Release of CBN 7-year Audited Financial Statement, Frowns at Depleted Foreign Reserves	-06
August Infographics Corner	-07
Tenure of EFCC chairs: The need to reform the electoral system, By Umar Yakubu	-09

INTRODUCTION

Esteemed Reader,

We are pleased to share the August edition of our Transparency Watch with you.

The past months, our work as civil society actors have been challenged in some ways with unrest and usurpation of civilian governments in the West African subregion and indeed, the continent at large, with recent coup in Gabon. The underlying factors for these military interventions are systemic corruption, poverty, electoral malpractice, sit-tight leaders, and neocolonialism.

The wave has called to question the effectiveness of our advocacy to promote good governance and hold the leaders accountable to the people. While it could be argued that our work has reawakened the people's consciousness to participate in electoral processes, it has become glaring that the right to vote is no longer enough, but the people are now interested in governance and working of systems, and how it translates to better life for the poor.

The month of August provided that opportunity for civil society actors to reflect on their work, and build capacity to effectively respond to emerging and established challenges to civic space and democratic governance in the continent. The West Africa Civil Society Week '23 organized by the West Africa Civil Society Institute and Partners emphasized the importance of civil society in countering democracy decline, coup attempts, foster collaboration, and evolve strategies to safeguard West Africa's democracy.

In this edition, you would also find report about our forthcoming symposium on Countering Organized Crime in Africa scheduled to hold between 24th and 25th of October, 2023. The 2-day event is planned to bring together key stakeholders to discuss collective efforts against organized crime, explore innovative strategies, and promote international collaboration to combat its global impact.

We hope that you will find this edition resourceful, and join us in the fight against corruption and promotion of public sector transparency.

Victor Agi

Public Relations Lead

Countering Organized Crime Project Center Visits INTERPOL, Seeks Collaboration to Stem Tide



Ahead of its Symposium to counter organized crime being planned in partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC Nigeria), the Center for Fiscal Transparency and Integrity Watch (CeFTIW) has visited the Vice President, International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol Africa), AIG Garba Umar (Rtd.) to seek collaboration in the fight against organized crime in the region.

In its strategic position, Interpol Africa works to “ensure that the law enforcement voice is heard at the African Union so as to strengthen security in Africa.”

Leading the team, the Center’s Board of Trustees (BoT) Chairman, Amb. Angela Nworgu said that the Center is interested in working with stakeholders to counter transnational organized crime in Africa which continues to disrupts and endanger lives and livelihood.

She added that the fight against organized crime requires coordinated efforts of stakeholders including governments, law enforcement agencies,

international organizations, and local communities in order to create a safer environment for the people of Africa.

Receiving the team, AIG Umar (Rtd.) pledged to work with the Center in the fight against organized crime, by providing necessary tools for sharing information, intelligence, and resources that will enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts, improve border security, strengthen legal frameworks, and promote socio-economic development.

The Symposium on Countering Organized Crime in Africa is scheduled to hold between 24th and 25th of October, 2023 and planned to serve as a unique platform that bring together key stakeholder to review collective efforts in the fight against organized crimes. The symposium will focus on discussing workable solutions to the rising threats of organized crime on the continent, and shed light on the multifaceted nature of organized crime, explore innovative strategies for combatting its global impact, and foster international collaboration to create a safer future.

Some Sights and Scenes from West Africa Civil Society Week'23



Consumer Rights Protection: Center Urges the Deployment of Technology to Facilitate Resolution of Complaints

The Center for Fiscal Transparency and Integrity Watch (CeFTIW) is urging the Federal Competition & Consumer Protection Commission (FCCPC) to utilize technology to facilitate the resolution of consumers' complaints.

This follows a presentation by the Executive Vice Chairman of the Commission, Babatunde Irukera, at the Bureau of Public Service Reforms' (BPSR) Lunchtime seminar.

The EVC decried the state of complaint resolution and company responsiveness to consumers in Nigeria, and called on consumers to channel their complaints to the Commission rather than the companies; stating the FCCPC as an agency has a mandate to educate, gauge prices to prevent monopoly, resolve consumer complaints and prosecute defaulters and saboteurs.

Irukera said that the passage of the FCCP Act which establishes the Commission and Tribunal is a pointer to government's commitment to protecting the rights of consumers; noting that the existence of a legislation modifies behavior, and advances right.

He stated however that more work needs to be done in order to operationalize the law and institutions in a manner that is profitable for consumers. He seized the opportunity to implore

civil servants especially to improve service delivery in their various offices, noting that it would be misplaced for civil servants to demand from service providers what they have not been giving to Nigerians.

"Making this country work is about all of us in this hall, and those by extension, we represent; and government is by far the most important platform for reforms and development," he added.

In his remarks, the Director General, BPSR, Dasuki Arabi said that the seminar is timely to lay the groundwork for a more customer-centric approach to public service, where accountability, transparency, and efficiency are paramount.

He said that FCCPC' role in consumer protection, dispute resolution, consumer education, enforcement of consumer laws, product quality and safety, and merger control are vital; and therefore, called for strengthening of collaborations with agencies that would amplify its mandates.

The Center holds that the use of technology will improve transparency, enhance operations and build citizens trust and confidence in the Commission's ability to protect consumers rights.



Fiscal Transparency: Center Commends Release of CBN 7-year Audited Financial Statement, Frowns at Depleted Foreign Reserves

The Center for Fiscal Transparency and Integrity Watch (CeFTIW) welcomes and commends the decision by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to release its audited financial statement covering the period between 2016-2022.

As one of the major variables in the Center's Transparency and Integrity Index (TII), an Index that seeks to promote the openness and accountability based on the principles of proactive disclosure and access to information, fiscal transparency is a vital component that was drawn from the provisions of section 48-49 of the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) which mandates public institutions to "ensure full and timely disclosure and wide publication of all transactions and decisions involving public revenues and expenditures and their implications for its finances."

The Center therefore call on MDAs that continue to flout this provision of the FRA to borrow a leaf from the CBN by disclosing and publishing their audited financial account to deepen accountability in government businesses.

Having stated this, the Center expresses its displeasure at the revelation that the CBN is indebted to JP Morgan and Goldman Sachs to the tune of \$7.5 billion, including a \$7 billion to JP Morgan and \$500 million to Goldman Sachs under a classified securities lending. This, the

report said is in addition to a \$6.3 billion exposure to foreign currency forwards. The securities lending is said to form part of the CBN's total external reserves of about \$30.1 billion (at the official exchange rate of N494/\$1 as at 2022), depleting the nation's foreign reserve to about \$17 billion, all things being equal.

The lack of operational transparency by the apex bank is an indictment on the leadership of the former President Muhammadu Buhari and the former CBN governor who met the reserve at \$34.2 billion and a total public debt of about 12 trillion when it came to power in 2015, but left the public debt at 77 trillion with the securitization of CBN Ways and Means in May 2023 before the expiration of the administration.



We call for further investigation into the operations of the CBN under the former President, and prosecution of officers who may have been involved in sabotaging the country's economy. We strongly hold

that nothing justifies the level of fiscal and monetary recklessness exhibited by public officers under the past administration, and therefore reiterate our call on relevant agencies, especially the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (ICPC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) to swiftly take action.

Also, President Bola Ahmed Tinubu must demonstrate commitment to the fight against corruption by ordering all federal Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to publish their audited financial statements in line with the provisions of the FRA. This, we believe, will promote transparency and deter public officers from further acting corruptly.

Oil Theft

Do you know?




“According to the National Security Adviser, Mal. Nuhu Ribadu, Nigeria, with the capacity to produce 2 million barrels of crude daily, loses 400,000bpd worth \$4m crude oil to theft every day, an approximate \$1.5 billion dollars every year”

Source: Blueprint

www.fiscaltransparency.org

Citizens Responsibility

“If you are not in politics, you must hold those in politics to account, it is not a comfortable situation to be in. When people are incompetent and they don't like you, you wear their dislike as a badge of honor; you can't be comfortable in a dysfunctional environment, so we must get outside our comfort zone...”



Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, CON

“Our weapons in the fight against corruption are the tools of accountability, transparency, and ethical leadership”

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

#Moltivationalmonday

Fiscal Transparency


Section 48 (1) of the Fiscal Responsibility Act

The Federal Government shall ensure that its fiscal and financial affairs are conducted in a transparent manner and accordingly ensure full and timely disclosure and wide publication of all transactions and decisions involving public revenues and expenditures and their implications for its finances

Do you Know?

Dissolution of ICPC Board

Section 3 (8) of the ICPC Act states that the Chairman or any member of the Commission may at any time be removed from the office of the President acting on an address supported by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Senate praying that he be removed for inability to discharge the functions of the office (whether arising from the infirmity of mind or body or any other cause) or for misconduct.

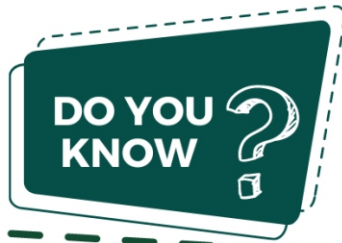


SKEPTICS

FCC job racketeering allegation

The Chairperson of the government agency (**Federal Character Commission**) empowered to work out equitable formula for the distribution of all cadres of posts in the civil and the public services of the federation and of the states, Muheeba Dankaka has allegedly been involved in **job racketeering, nepotism and highhandedness.**

In an ongoing probe by House of Reps. Ad hoc Committee, testifiers alleged, among others that Dankaka sold job slots into federal MDAs for between **1m-1.5m naira.**



About 660 staff at the Kaduna Refining and Petrochemical Company (KRPC), 506 staff at the Port Harcourt Refining Company (PHRC), and 437 staff at the Warri Refining and Petrochemical Company (WRPC) earned 136bn in salaries as of 2021 without refining a drop of crude oil

Source: Guardian



PROBES MONITOR PORTAL

The Center's probes monitor portal hosts information on grand corruption-related investigations that were made public from 1999 till date. The project is designed to draw the attention of relevant stakeholders to advocate and promote the conclusion of the avalanche of abandoned legislative, executive and judicial probes, while also serving as a platform for citizens to demand accountability

595

Total number of cases in the Probes Monitor Portal

03

Total number of concluded probes

592

Total number of ongoing/inconclusive probes

351

Probes ongoing for over 1000 days

visit <https://www.fiscaltransparency.org/probesmonitor/current-probes> to access the probes



Tenure of EFCC chairs: The need to reform the electoral system

By Umar Yakubu

“Fear of losing power corrupts those who wield it, and fear of the scourge of power corrupts those who are subject to it.” — Aung San Suu Kyi



Ba victim of the political system. He survived, and posterity has proved him right. In his words, corruption will always fight back. The political system has recently claimed its recent victim, Abdul Rasheed Bawa.

Within the anti-corruption space, the Code of Corruption Bureau (CCB) has a bigger mandate of curbing public sector corruption. In the past eight years, the organisation has been dormant, while those at the helm of its affairs remain. There are over six hundred ministries, departments and agencies of the Federal Government. Just a few factual examples: the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) has become run down, our electricity has not radically improved, the public healthcare system is comatose, and the country still bleeds from wastage in the oil and gas sector. Though there are no penalties for crass incompetence, the change of those who were part of the problem elicits hope in the citizen that things will be better.

Until INEC reduces the role of funds in the electoral system, no EFCC chair will survive, nor will the judiciary ever maintain its integrity and dignity

public sector corruption is a bane of our progress as a nation. For decades, outsiders saw the country as a haven of corrupt activities. Within the country, news of corruption is the daily headliner. Although there are many good public servants, yet almost every public servant has been accused or is seen as corrupt. It is usually shocking when you find a non-corrupt one. The opposite is the norm. Regime after regime, every government has tried to do something about the problem of corruption. In 1999, President Obasanjo decided to provide a comprehensive legal and institutional framework for combatting public sector corruption. He birthed the Independent Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC).

As with everything, leadership matters. The quality of leadership determines the success or failure of any organisation. Somehow, the leadership of the EFCC from 2004 decided to do the extraordinary – tackle public sector corruption and exceed all known boundaries. Nuhu Ribadu took the bar so high that it laid a problem for the Commission. Prior to him, the norm was to idle away and conform to the usual. He decided to do otherwise and was, of course, the first

All the research on Nigeria’s electoral financing points to public sector corruption. Countering such falls within the realm of the EFCC, ICPC and CCB. Effectively combatting it requires holding the politician class accountable for the public resources it oversees. The oxygen of political aspiration and survival is too dependent on public sector funds. While others have decided to look away, that is the area the the EFCC has focused on since 2004.

Read published article on PremiumTimes heres: <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/opinion/610240-tenure-of-efcc-chairs-the-need-to-reform-the-electoral-system-by-umar-yakubu.html>



Contact us at:
No 11 Ado-Ekiti Close, Area 11, Abuja

www.fiscaltransparency.org

 [fiscaltransparencynigeria](https://www.facebook.com/fiscaltransparencynigeria)  [fiscaltransparencyNG](https://twitter.com/fiscaltransparencyNG)  [fiscaltransparencynigeria](https://www.instagram.com/fiscaltransparencynigeria)