



THE PRESIDENCY
INTER-AGENCY TASK TEAM
(ANTI-CORRUPTION AGENCIES)



THE INTER-AGENCY TASK TEAM (IATT)

In Collaboration with

THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU), RULE OF LAW AND ANTI-CORRUPTION (ROLAC) PROGRAMME, THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME (UNODC), MACARTHUR FOUNDATION AND THE CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT (CDD)

ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY EVENT 2024

VENUE: CONGRESS HALL, TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA ON THURSDAY, 11TH JULY 2024.

Theme:

***“EFFECTIVE WHISTLEBLOWERS PROTECTION MECHANISM:
A CRITICAL TOOL IN THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION.”***

Rapporteur's Report



CONTENT

Introduction	3
Overview	3
Executive Summary	3
Opening Session	4
Welcome Remarks	4
Goodwill Messages	6
Presentation of the 3rd Corruption Survey in Nigeria	8
Keynote Address	10
Launch of the 3rd Corruption Survey in Nigeria	11
Paper Presentations	12
Questions and Answers	14
Conclusion	15



Introduction

This is the Report on the event to mark the Anti-Corruption Day Event of the African Union, 2024, with the theme; “***Effective whistleblowers protection mechanism: a critical tool in the fight against corruption: An Impediment to the Sustainable Development Goals***”, held on the 11th day of July 2024.

The ~~report~~Report is in eleven main parts:

- 1.0 Overview
- 2.0 Executive Summary
- 3.0 Opening Session
- 4.0 Welcome Remarks
- 5.0 Goodwill Messages
- 6.0 Presentation of the Report of the Third Corruption Survey in Nigeria
- 7.0 Keynote Address
- 8.0 Launch of the Report of the Third Corruption Survey in Nigeria NBS X UNODC.
- 9.0 Paper Presentation/
- 10.0 Interactions
- 11.0 Conclusion/Closing Remarks

1.0 OVERVIEW

Every 11th of July, following the ratification and adoption by the African Union member states of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) in Maputo, Mozambique in 2003, the continent has been marking the Africa Anti-Corruption Day. The adoption represents a continent-wide effort to harmonize the fight against corruption by African States.

The theme of this year’s celebration which marks the 8th celebration; “***Effective whistleblowers protection mechanism: a critical tool in the fight against corruption***”, recognizes the important role of whistleblowers in the fight against corruption and the need to provide legal protections and incentives to all persons who report corrupt practices and other illicit activities that militate against the development and growth of the States in the Continent and Africa as a whole..

In celebrating, Nigeria joins the rest of Africa in calling for and committing to the arrangement of an effective policy and legal framework for the protection of whistleblowers given their imperative part in the fight against corruption.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT) as part of its commitment to mutually and thoroughly tackle matters in the anti-corruption corruption sphere holds joint activities to enlighten the public and increase synergy, raise awareness and mobilize the society on the critical need to combatfight corruption- and increase synergy within its rank and file.

The Technical Unit on Governance and Anti-Corruption (TUGAR), which is the secretariat of the IATT, in line with its commitment to so do, organized the event to mark the 8th anniversary of the Africa Anti-Corruption Day on the 11th of July 2024 with its theme;

Effective Whistle Blowers Protection Mechanism; A Critical Tool in The Fight Against Corruption. The year's theme underscores the importance of whistle blowers in the fight against corruption and advocates ~~Ghana passed a Whistleblower Act, 2006 (Act 720) that provided for~~ legal protections and incentives to all persons who report corrupt practices and other illicit activities that ~~militated~~**militate** against the development and growth of the ~~country. The Act empowers~~**continent as a whole and African States, individually. It emphasizes the need to empower** victims and witnesses of corruption to disclose information about observed corrupt or unlawful activities and ~~offers~~**offer** protection and rewards to whistleblowers.

The TUGAR planned and executed the event in collaboration with the following development partners: The European Union (EU), IDEA/Rule of Law and Anti-corruption (RoLAC II) Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Macarthur Foundation and the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD).

The hybrid event took place at the ~~Congress Hall, Transcorp Hotel, Abuja and had~~ both a physical and virtual audience. In ~~attendance~~ the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, the Executive Secretary, African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AU-ABC), Heads of Anti-corruption agencies and drew a wide array of participants from government, public, private, media, business sector, civil society and development partners.

~~In all,~~ the event ~~featured~~ the Opening Remark, Goodwill Messages, Keynote Address, ~~2 paper~~ presentation; ***“Impact of the Whistleblowing Policy on Public Sector Accountability and Transparency”*** and ***“The Whistleblowers Protection Bill: Challenges and the Way Forward”***, in the Technical Session, with the icing on the cake being the the Launch of the Report of the Third Corruption Survey carried out by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

3.0 OPENING SESSION

The compere for the event was Frank Tietie, Esq. The event originally slated for 9am commenced at 10.19 am, with an apology for starting late and an invitation to the raised platform of the distinguished persons at the event, followed quickly by a rendition of the National Anthem. The roll call of those in attendance in no particular order is as follows: Musa Adamu Aliyu, SAN, Chairman of the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC), Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, Executive Secretary, Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Madam Lilian Ekeanyanwu, the erstwhile Head, TUGAR, ~~Prince Adeyemi Adeniran, Statistician General and the Head of the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, Mr. Olanipekun Olukayode, Chairman, Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Chief Barr. Victor Chiemere Urakwu, Chairman Fiscal Responsibility Commission, Mr. Danilo Campise,~~ Deputy Country Representative of the United Nations on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Dr. Emmanuel Uche of the International IDEA/Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC II), Mrs. Mary Okpe, Head of Programmes, CDD, Mr. Ashley Emenike, Secretary, Global Organization of Parliamentarians against Corruption, Mrs. Jane Onwumere, Head, TUGAR, Prince Lateef Fagbemi, SAN, Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Barr. ~~Olusegun Omotola, Director General, Bureau of the Federation, Barr. Public Procurement,~~ Dr. Kole Shettima of Macarthur Foundation, Mr. Mike Nzekwe, Chief of Staff to the EFCC Chairman, Abdulrahman Chukkol, Director, Investigation, Wilson Uwujaren, Ag Director, Public Affairs, Ahmad Pate, Director Finance & Accounts, Sylvanus Tahir, SAN, Director, Legal & Prosecution, and Tony Idoko, Special Senior Assistant to the Chairman, all of the EFCC, Ifeanyi

Okorochoa, Director, Proceeds of Crimes Act, Code of Conduct Bureau, Barr. Omotola Olusegun, Acting Director General of the Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP), Dr. Victoria Chukwuemeka, Director, PRS, Ministry of Justice, [Barr. Henry Emore, Director Legal Services of the ICPC](#), [Barr. Shehu Yahaya, Director, Operations of the ICPC](#), [Dr. Fawale B.A Representing the Auditor General of the Federation.](#)

4. WELCOME REMARK

Mrs. Jane Onwumere, Head of TUGAR, gave the Welcome Remark. Mrs. Onwumere set the order of protocol and acknowledged the fact that this year's celebration was the eighth in the series since the adoption of the Convention in 2003. She said that day affords Nigeria and the African Continent an opportunity to create awareness on the menace, take stock of gains, evolution, feats, and challenges in the fight against corruption and find ways to better stand against this scourge. She reminded the attendees that the 2023 African Anti-Corruption Day event was the 20th Anniversary of the adoption of the Convention and as such it was focused on implementation reviews. The reviews revealed the inadequacies of the implementation of Article 5 (6) of the Convention by Member States, a dearth in whistleblowing systems and mechanism which has militated against the fight against corruption. This gap led to the conception of the year's theme which is a testament to the pivotal role of whistleblowers in the fight against Corruption.

Mrs. Onwumere emphasized crucial position of whistleblowers in the fight against corruption for which reason she stated that they need to be adequately protected so that they can report corruption without fear of harm.

A review of the implementation by Nigeria of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) revealed that though many of its recommendations have been addressed, we have no whistleblower's protection law as what is currently being implemented is the Whistleblower Policy 2016. This Policy can hardly take the place of a proper legal framework for the protection of whistle blowers, hence the need to pass the Whistle blowers Bill into effect thereby meeting our treaty obligation

She stated the features of the event, the highlight being the Launch of the report of the Third Corruption Survey carried out by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS) in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). She then thanked the Honourable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Lateef Fagbemi SAN and all heads of Agencies in attendance.

The erudite remark was concluded with appreciations to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the European Union/IDEA Rule of Law and Anti-corruption (RoLAC II) Programme, the MacArthur Foundation, the Centre for Democracy and Development and the agencies that make up the IATT for their support, synergy and unity in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, and for supporting the event.

On this note, she welcomed everyone and looked forward to very fruitful deliberations.

Remarks by the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC)

This message was delivered by Madam Martha Mchali, a Senior Policy Officer for Madam Charity Malema, who had to attend another event, on behalf of the AUABC. She stood on existing protocols and welcomed everyone to the Seminar, the commemoration of the adoption of the Convention. [She acknowledged the roles of state and non-state actors in the fight against corruption and the progress made thus far despite of which corruption was](#)

still a challenge which needs to continually be fought. She restated the commitment of the AUABC to join hands with the UNODC, African States and Agencies and bodies to fight the scourge of corruption and engender a culture of integrity and transparency.

She stated that the progress made thus far is evidenced by the fact of increased signatories to the Convention since its adoption and the improvement shown by the reviews carry out by the AUABC. She re-emphasised the fact already stated by the Head of TUGAR that the 2023 Review exposed the need for a better framework for the protection and incentivising Whistleblowers given the very important role they play in the fight corruption. In light of this, the AUABC is committed to render technical assistance and capacity building in the area of whistle blowing with a view to developing a harmonised policy framework and guidelines in this regard, which obviously is lacking among member states.

She lauded the effort of Nigeria in the fight against corruption and hoped that the Report of the NBS-UNODC Survey will help other States learn from the strides made by the Nigerian State in its fight against corruption. On this note, she wished everyone a good deliberation.

5.0 GOODWILL MESSAGES

Message from the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC):

The Chairman of the ICPC, Dr. Musa Adamu Aliyu SAN, brought the message on behalf of his Commission. He observed the protocol and welcomed everyone to the event which he posits is a result of our shared commitment to fight the menace, corruption. He cited statutory and judicial authorities, basis of which the ICPC commits to the protection of whistle blowers in view of their invaluable contributions in the fight against corruption.

The learned Silk emphasised on the need for collaboration and effective partnerships to achieve sustainable success in this fight against the global monster and recommitted to remaining steadfast in so doing. He told the August gathering that the Commission under his leadership takes its responsibilities seriously and will continue to work tirelessly in the fight against corruption. He hoped that the event will foster synergy among all parties in furtherance of the anti-corruption efforts.

In closing, he appealed to the National Assembly to in line with international best practices, pass Whistle Blower Law as this will engender confidence in whistleblowers in both public and private sectors and bolster the nations' anti-corruption efforts and as such the legislation should ensure the anonymity, safety, and rights of whistleblowers, extending protections to those in both public and private sectors. By doing so, Nigeria can, bolster ~~its~~the nation's anti-corruption efforts, safeguard the constitutional rights of its citizens, and promotethus promoting a culture of transparency and accountability across all levels of society.

Message from NEITI

The goodwill message for NEITI was delivered by its Executive Secretary, Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji. Upon observing protocols, he brought greetings from his Agency and said the event presents an opportunity for networking with other agencies in the anti-corruption sphere. He said that the year's goal mirrors the vision, mandate, goals, and mission of the NEITI as it is a key element in the quest for transparency and accountability and as such it has led strong advocacy in this regard to ensure a corruption free Nigeria where the basic necessities are provided to the citizens. The Role of Whistle blowers in this effort cannot be overemphasized and they require protection for this purpose. NEITI has advocated for a

comprehensive [legal and policy framework](#) to guarantee safety for whistleblowers [within the extractive industry and beyond](#).

[The Annual Industry Reports produced by the NEITI](#) contain tools in form of data and information which can be utilized by Civil Society, media and all in the anti-corruption sphere for advocacy purposes. NEITI is in talks with the National Human Rights Commission [to sign a memorandum to expand the civic space and enable whistle blowers and other actors participate in analyzing data](#) and use it as tools to push the fight against corruption.

The 2023 EITI Standards received [by NEITI in which it participated](#) have schematic areas that are focused on anti-corruption for member countries. This allows the use of EITI Reports and platforms to identify corruption within the extractive industry as companies and stakeholders are enjoined to publish Reports and engage in reforms based on due diligence. When this happens, whistle blowers will be protected as there will be provisions laid down therein, thereby ensuring accountability and transparency, thereby rebuilding the eroded trust and confidence of the citizenry in the government.

Message from the Fiscal Responsibilities Commission (FRC)

Chief Barrister Victor Chinemerem Morako, the Chairman FRC delivered the good will message for his agency. He says he is particularly delighted to be part of the program and endorsed the theme of the year's celebration being the 8th in the series for its aptness. While acknowledging the effort and the strides made by Nigeria in the fight against corruption, there is still no Whistle Blowers Act in place in the country. There is a need to pass the Policies into a proper Act, because the nonexistence has impeded the role of whistleblowers. It is imperative to as a continent and the nation Nigeria, work in synergy to strengthen the framework. He commended the IATT together with donor partners and international agencies for their role in the success of the day's event, as it is a reminder of our obligations to kill corruption or at least reduce it to a bare minimum. The FRC is a member of IATT and is committed to further good governance and citizen's participation by ensuring a safe space for the fight against corruption although the commission may not be frontally visible. He opined that it is cheaper to prevent corruption than to seek to cure it, hence the need to pass the Whistleblowers Act. He thanked the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics and the UNODC for their effort in producing the 3rd National Corruption Survey to be launched at the event which he hoped will pave the way for progress in the fight. He recommitted to working with all of the agencies in the IATT in the fight.

Message from the MacArthur Foundation.

In his very brief message, Dr. Kole Shettima, the Country Director welcomed everyone and stated that the MacArthur Foundation funded the Survey to be launched and hoped that the outcome will be useful. He urged all to recommit to the fight against corruption to make a better country and continent. He said the Foundation and its likes provides a support system and cannot work without the support of everyone.

Message from the Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP)

Barr. Omotola Olusegun, Acting Director General of the Bureau spoke for his Agency, he stood on existing protocols and congratulated the organisers of the event for the good work they do and expressed confidence in the fact that at the end of the meeting, everyone would have gained more. He stated that there has been continuous attempts made by government in a bid to tackle corruption one of which is the encouragement of whistle blowers. The BPP has synergized with other anti-corruption agencies in 3 key areas and there has been progress therein.

Barr. Olusegun said that there is an urgent need for the passage into Act of the Whistle Blowers Act to give a framework to the issue because an uncodified policy cannot be implemented and is only persuasive. He said in order to protect whistle blowers different reporting channels should be provided. Also, there is a need to protect them and keep them anonymous.

He was glad to announce that the BPP will have a portal where whistleblowers can anonymously drop their information, info@bpp.gov.ng. There is also a platform where contractors are registered whereon complaints can be received by the BPP and this will lead to audit and surveillance to ensure that issues of procurement corruption. According to him, Section 53 of the BPP Act empowers it to forward information to ICPC and EFCC to enable them follow it up. He encouraged everyone to blow the whistle on corruption in procurement by writing to the Director General and it will be investigated.

Message from the Center for Democracy and Development (CDD):

For the CDD, Mrs. Mary Okpe, Head of Programmes brought the message. She stated that the day is to honor whistleblowers who are hardly celebrated despite their huge contribution in the fight against corruption and the risk they bear. She said the day reminds us of the challenges posed by corruption to democracy, democratic governance and all of its tenets in Africa. By strengthening the framework that contribute to whistleblower protection, a huge stride would have been taken to bring the Africa of our dream

CDD partners with anti-corruption agencies in the fight against corruption. It has supported in capacity building, improvement of forensic capacities, trainings to help reduce corruption. The fight is continuous if the Africa of our dreams must be achieved. CDD she said, remains steadfast in the commitment and is hopeful that if everyone is united in the fight, the battle will be won.

Message from International IDEA/Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC II)

This Message was delivered by Dr. Emmanuel Uche. He said the RoLAC works to strengthen democracy globally. He said, democracy without delivery of dividend to the people is not tenable and corruption possess a challenge for to the delivery of dividends to a people. It therefore becomes clear that whistle blowers should be frontliners in the fight against corruption and protecting them is key due to the roles they perform.

He ended with rhetorical questions: how does the Official Secrets Act with Oaths of Secrecy administered on public officers in this day and age help with strengthening the foundation of democracy with its attendant gains. Although the Freedom of Information Act has been passed, there are States that still do not believe that it is important to the fight against corruption. He recommended the mainstreaming of the FOI and the replacement of the Oaths of Secrecy with Oath of Integrity and Accountability. He assured everyone that the IDEA will continue to partner with everyone to improve Rule of law, democracy and all of its tenets.

6.0 PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE 3RD CORRUPTION SURVEY IN NIGERIA

Presentation by the Statistician General of the Federation/Head, Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS)

The Report was presented by the SGF, [Prince Adeyemi Adeniran](#), who observed protocols and thanked the MacArthur Foundation for funding the Survey. He expressed his joy for witnessing the launch of the 3rd Survey also known as the National Survey of Quality and

Integrity of Public Services in Nigeria which also coincides with the event of the AU's Anti-Corruption Day with its very apposite theme.

A cursory look at the attendance with the quality of people and agencies, shows that there is progress in the fight against corruption with the use and aid of statistical data. He said that the 1st and 2nd Round of the Survey were conducted in 2016 and 2019 while this 3rd Round conducted by the NBS, IATT in Collaboration with the UNODC and funding by the MacArthur Foundation, marks a significant milestone in the fight against corruption. This is in line with the transparency and good governance agenda of the government.

Nigeria has through this 3 Surveys, showed itself as leader in the fight against corruption and its adherence to the tenets of the Convention. The Surveys are unique as they seek to analyze corruption from everyday experiences of Nigerians rather than just perceived corruption, making it more useful to government and all other users and with every round there is always an improvement over the last.

The Gender and Disability modules, 2 very vital ones, were added to this round of the Survey to give a deeper understanding of the experience and impact of corruption on marginalized, vulnerable groups. This Survey has also improved in its modality for measuring bribery to align with the recommendation of SDG 16.5.1. This Survey also presented an opportunity to analyze the trends of corruption as it affects households because it is the 3rd in the series. The relevance of the Survey is underscored by the Report which shows progress as well as areas needed to be improved on.

Further, it shows that 70% of citizens asked to pay bribes refused to pay, which shows there is also a notable increase in the rate of bribery reporting between 2019 and 2023, as there was a 65% increase of reports to Police as opposed to 42% in the previous one, there was also a rise to anti-corruption agencies all which evidences an improvement and the efficacy of the orientation by the agencies. There is also a notable increase in the rate of action taken as a consequence of reporting, as 45% of the cases reported were prosecuted as opposed to 16% in 2019.

The Head, NBS reported that, there is still a significant rate of corruption in Nigeria despite the strides made. The purpose of this Survey or any Survey carried out by the NBS is not to castigate but to present statistical data that will aid in the betterment of the provision of public service and an improvement in the lives of the citizenry. He acknowledged the collective efforts and contributions of all agencies that served to make this Survey a reality; the Ministry of Justice, Nigerian Police Force, EFCC and the ICPC. He thanked the UNODC and MacArthur Foundation for its unwavering support to the fight against corruption in Nigeria and to the making of the Survey.

Presentation by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, (UNODC)

Mr. Danilo Campise, the Deputy Country Representative of the UNODC, standing existing protocols voiced his pleasure at his presence at the event whereat the 3rd Anti-Corruption Survey is being launched. He then lauded Nigeria's commitment to the anti-corruption efforts, which is manifest in the agenda of the government, the implementation in various ways of the provision of the UNCAC.

Mr. Campise said that the 3rd Survey aims to unveil trends of corruption from the experiences of the citizens as this is a way to measure the progress of the government. This 3rd National Survey puts Nigeria in the lead in establishing international best practices in the

implementation of articles 10 and 61 of UNCAC. The Survey reveals progress with citizens fighting back by refusing to pay a bribe when asked to do so. Also, the percentage of those who were willing to report incidents of bribery more than doubled from 3.6% in 2019 to 8.6% in 2023.

An improvement in government processes led to a reduction in negative consequences on people who did the right thing, increase in channels for reporting corruption, initiation of remediation and an a consequent increase in the number of people willing to report incidences of corruption.

On the way forward, Mr. Campise stated that gaps and challenges cannot be ignored even in the face of obvious progress. To him, all hands must be on deck to fight corruption and the fight should not be left to the government alone. He encouraged all and sundry to do all they can begin implementing the recommendations of the Report. For this he chose 3 critical recommendations from amongst others. They are that:

- priority should be given to what matters to the citizen and the need to prevent corruption in those sectors.
- Citizenship empowerment to encourage positive behavioral changes and attitudes by targeted campaigns and public rewards system.
- Promotion of Gender Equity, Women Empowerment, and Social Inclusion of members of vulnerable groups like the people living with disabilities.

In concluding, Mr. Campise averred that this Survey is very important because, although the perception of corruption is important, it does not always coincide with reality. Perception measures how a country's public sector ~~There is perceived therefore the need to be corrupt, and it is definitely an element to~~ ~~5- take into account. However, efforts to prevent and combat corruption should be driven by~~ carry out scientific research and data to understand the challenges, gaps, and patterns to inform effective preventive strategies, help preempt, mitigate, and react to corruption. He thanked Nigeria for its efforts to mitigate corruption in Nigeria.

Presentation by the MacArthur Foundation

Dr. Kole Shettima, thanked the NBS and UNODC for the work and expressed joy in the result which shows progress. He hoped that the recommendations will be implemented so that the Nation can build on it to make the next Survey better than this one.

7.0 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Lateef Fagbemi, SAN, the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice delivered the Keynote Address. He adopted the existing protocol and expressed his pleasure as being at the event. He explained the reason for the event and said that its theme is a reminder of the fact that Nigeria does not have an Act to cater for Whistle Blowing as what has been utilized is the Whistle Blowing Policy 2016, which has helped thus far but cannot take the place of a law that protects the whistleblower, hence the need to work with the legislative arm to achieve this.

He defined whistleblowing as a key tool to detect corruption and other forms of wrongdoing, report misconduct and assist in monitoring of compliance with anti-corruption laws. He stated further that a person who reports wrongdoing in the interest of the public is a whistleblower, who is at greater a huge risk of negative consequences for information given confidentially if known to the persons affected. ~~Owing to the substantial benefits to the parties involved in corruption, and the serious threat of criminal and other punishments to~~

~~which these parties are exposed, persons who report these corrupt activities can put themselves, family members and colleagues at risk. Instead of admitting to corruption and mending their ways, persons implicated in corruption can choose to attack or retaliate. In view of this, whistleblower. This risk does not only affect the whistleblowers but his loved ones. It is for this reason that the protection is crucial for the success of anti-corruption detection and enforcement and should be a of a whistleblower is key aspect of in any whistleblowing system.~~

The need to protect whistleblowers is behind the move to pass into law the Whistleblowing Protection Bill proposed in 2019. It is still pending and needs to be passed expeditiously by the National Assembly. Effective whistleblowing mechanism can be used curb corruption in a number of areas. The challenges being faced by whistleblower are insufficient knowledge of law, fear of reprisal, lack of meaningful implementation of the law, among others. There is therefore the need for the government to ~~confidential/loyalty provisions, cultural/historic barriers amongst others. In ensuring an effective whistleblowing mechanism is put in place to tackle corruption, it is mandatory ensure a legal framework for Government to put in place an effective law to protect the protection of whistleblowers from risks and to also educate and create awareness on the rules and procedures of whistleblowing and to as well create an organizational culture of transparency that supports whistleblowing. I am of the view carry out orientation programs for them. It is the view of the AGF that establishing an effective reporting system which protect whistleblowers should be recognized as a key measure to detect wrongdoing at an early stage. In our quest to tackle corruption, recipients He stated that those tasked to respond to whistleblower concerns must therefore with receipt of information must protect the identity of personsthose who made reports and organizations should protect whistleblowers from unjustified treatment. Let me also state, make available the information and that a law in that by introducing a comprehensive stand-alone whistleblower protection law, cases of corruption and other related offences can be detectedregard will make corruption easily which willdetectable and consequently reduce the harmful effect of corruption in the country. This commemorative~~

~~The Learned Silk informed the gathering that the event is taking placehappening at a crucial time when Nigeria has just commenced the implementation of the second2nd phase of the National Anti-corruption Strategy (NACS) 2022 – 2026 and its Action Plan., commenced. The NACS is part of the government's ongoing efforts to prevent and combat corruption and strengthen good governance across all sectors at both the national and subnational levels. The NACSaccording to him, is one of Nigeria's treaty obligations under the UNCAC and provides a holistic, collaborative and coordinated approach to the fight against corruption and seeks to develop and implement mechanisms aimed at improving governance of public institutions at the Federal, State and Local all levels of government. The NACS Action Plan is being worked on by the Ministry of Justice and should be operationalized shortly.~~

~~levels by combatting corruption related factors inhibiting government's capacity to deliver quality services to Nigerians. My Ministry, working with key stakeholders, is in the process of finalizing the Action plan 2022 – 2026 which would be launched and operationalized shortly. The NACS Action plan lays out the actions and tasks to be undertaken, timelines and responsible bodies. We have also been working hard to put in place the necessary structures for implementation of the strategy; establishment and inauguration of Inter-Ministerial Committee, development of the Anti-Corruption Funding Framework (AFF) and strengthening of the NACS Secretariat under my office. The adoption and implementation of this Strategy is one of Nigeria's treaty obligations under the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). Nigeria signed up to this Convention in 2003 and ratified same~~

~~in 2004. The present administration is planning to review and amend procurement act to block the loopholes for persons who facilitate corruption. A lot of developing many mechanisms have been developed to ensure that corruption gaps in MDAs are blocked. Furthermore, government has put in place guidelines and regulations to ensure, budgetary provisions are adhered to and supervisory roles enhanced. The launch of the report of the Third Corruption Survey undertaken by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in collaboration with the Nigeria Bureau of Statistics (NBS) on this day is therefore remarkable and in keeping with the aspirations of government. This is because the findings discussed here today show. This makes the launch of the report of the Third Corruption Survey remarkable and in line with government aspirations. It is his position that the discourse at the event shows that Nigeria has done well in establishing the with the whistleblower mechanisms with and the use of technology. I am happy to note that the report highlights the level of confidence in government by citizens who and Nigerians are now more willing to report cases of corruption and refuse bribes. The Government has made several of such investments in technology to ensure greater transparency and accountability. This shows this government's commitment in the fight against corruption. I must note however, that~~

~~He queried the conclusion of the Survey conclusion which in his opinion appears to be premised on a pre-conceived notion that public officials are corrupt, so the lesser the contact with public officials the lower the corruption index. Surely this conclusion cannot be said to be an absolute truth. The conclusion He refuted the absoluteness of such a conclusion as it takes away from the professionalism of the Public Service and the impact of key Government reforms and initiatives of government like the Federal Civil Service Strategy and Implementation Plan 2021 – 2025, its enablers and core values.~~

The Honorable AGF called for a collective implementation of the roles assigned by the NACS Action plan which has identified key laws, policies and structures that need to be strengthened. He beseeched Nigerians to work together to prevent and combat corruption. He further applauded the IATT together with TUGAR, the UNODC, International IDEA, CDD and the MacArthur Foundation for putting together the event given its significance and their commitment to help in the fight against corruption. He ended the well-worded remark by recommitting to work with all stakeholders to ensure the smooth implementation of NACS which would guarantee corruption is curbed to the barest minimum in line with the eight (8) point agenda of the present administration.

8.0 LAUNCH OF THE REPORT OF THE THIRD CORRUPTION SURVEY IN NIGERIA NBS X UNODC.

The Honorable Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Prince Lateef Fagbemi, SAN, delegated his role of launching the Report to the Chairman of the ICPC, Dr. Musa Adamu Aliyu SAN. The launch was done with pictures taken by all stakeholders and with much appreciation to the UNODC, MacArthur Foundation and the NBS.

TECHNICAL SESSION

9.0 PAPER PRESENTATIONS

Paper1: Impact of the Whistle Blowing Policy on Public Sector Accountability and Transparency

Presenter: Executive Chairman, EFCC, Mr. Ola Olukayode

In a Paper titled Reviving the Whistleblower Policy, the Executive Chairman of the EFCC ~~theme of said~~ the theme of the year was carefully selected to address the challenges associated with whistleblowing given its role as a tool in the fight against corruption with a view to enhancing its effectiveness. In his words, whistle blowing entails exposing wrongdoings in every sphere whether in the private or public sector. The concept is not new to Nigeria, but as a Paper he titled Reviving deliberate program of Government, it was 1st given a policy framework and incentivized in 2016 to encourage people with information on looted funds to come forward and a number of whistleblowers came forward with information that helped in recovery of funds that are proceeds of corruption, while others came forward just to witch hunt people and lie to the authorities.

According to Mr. Olukayode, seven years after the Policy was emplaced, the Whistleblower Policy, progress made is a matter of conjecture and corrupt people learnt from the Executive Chairman of mistakes of people who had been caught and have become more daring. This brings to fore the EFCC said question of what went wrong with the implementation of the Whistle Blowers Policy which led to loss of wind in its sail. Lack of a legal framework, implementation of the Policy, to mention a few. He suggested a complete overhaul

of the programme to address the identified ambiguities and other weaknesses. In his view the expeditious enactment of the Whistle Blowers Act, which is already before the National Assembly, reorientation of whistleblowers to avoid them exposing themselves, elimination of repercussions against whistleblowers, streamlining the channels for reporting and reduction of the bureaucracy around the payment of incentives to whistle blowers.

The EFCC he said has developed the Eagle Eye, an application which is currently being upgraded but which enables individuals to report economic and financial crimes anonymously to the Commission and has led to a number of arrests and recoveries.

He concluded his presentation with the suggestion that whistleblowing will be reinvigorated if there is a reorientation to anchor it on a moral desire to do good as opposed to a desire for rewards, to help in prevention rather than recovery as the entire loot may never be recovered.

Paper 2: Whistleblower Protection in Nigeria, the Role of the Civil Society, Challenges and the Way Forward.

Presenter: The Executive Secretary, GOPAC, Mr. Ashley Emenike.

Mr. Emenike said that the National Assembly passed the Whistleblower Public Interest Disclosure Legislation and the Witness Protection and Management Bill. The former was passed in order not to create multiple agencies, it thus expands the mandate of the Public Complaint Commission (PCC). This however required the amendment of the Constitution since the PCC is a creation of the Constitution, an amendment which could not be effected before the lapse of the last administration. The latter was passed by both Chambers of the National Assembly but has been held back for reason of a glitch.

The Public Complaint Commission Act:

Section 5 of the PCC Act was amended to accommodate its receiving and investigation of public interest disclosure and protect whistle blowers from victimization. Section 10 was amended to include immunity for public interest disclosers and protect them from criminal and civil liabilities. This was justified by the fact that it was required by Articles 33 of the UNCAC and 12 of the AUCPCC, respectively.

The functions of the PCC in respect to public interest disclosures according to the Presenter in summary are; management and monitoring of public interest disclosure and complaints Educational and advisory and the determination of nature of protection for disclosers. By this PCC Act, public interest disclosures can be made orally, in writing, or in any other manner prescribed by the Commission, where same is believed to be true. It provides for immunity for public interest disclosers and criminalizes any threats to a discloser with adequate punishment prescribed. Victimization is also made actionable as a tort thereunder. A person who receives any information under this Act has the duties to keep it secret, violation of which is deemed criminal with attendant consequences.

Amendment of the PCC Act requires the amendment of the Constitution and is in Mr. Emenike's view a necessity for a robust whistleblower regime and will also fulfill the treaty obligations of Nigeria under the AUCPCC and UNCAC.

Witness Protection and Management Act, 2022 (WPMA):

Mr. Emenike defined a witness as one who has information about the commission of an offence or wrongdoing and has given, is giving, or agreed to give evidence on behalf of the State and may include persons who have made statements to law enforcement officers or are required to give evidence in a prosecution or inquiry held outside Nigeria.

He said the WPMA was passed but halted after been passed by both Chambers due to omission of certain key provisions occasioned by the rush to finish the process. The Section establishing the Witness Protection Council was deemed too verbose and had to be put off. This Act put in place the legal framework without establishing an institution. It is to be used by all institutions, agencies and departments that have need of it. Its Objectives are; the protection of witnesses and related persons, harmonization of laws in this regard and the supervision of Witness Protection Officers. The Act applies to investigation and prosecution of offences related to terrorism, money laundering, and other related offences and all justice sector institutions and other relevant regulatory institution.

Key provisions of the Act were mentioned, further that the establishment of the Witness Protection and Management Programme is to be done by relevant agencies with the aim of providing for the safety and welfare of witnesses. The Act provides for the protection of witnesses from identification, duties, deployment and training of Welfare Protection Officers, Rights and Obligations of Witnesses, the establishment of a Witness Protection Fund with its sources and application of money in the Protection Fund and the establishment of the Witness Protection Council. The Act prescribes offences with the penalties and has a few Miscellaneous Provisions. Overall, the Witness Protection and Management Act, 2022 provides a framework for the support, management, and protection of witnesses in criminal and related proceedings.

On the way forward, Mr. Emenike alluded to the importance of the advocacy role of civil society organizations which helps to push the government.

In conclusion, he assured the gathering that both Bills discussed are before the National Assembly as sponsored by Senator Barnada Ngigi, they have been listed and should be up for hearing shortly.

10.0 INTERACTIONS/QUESTIONS/CONTRIBUTIONS/SUGGESTIONS

The questions for both papers were taken at the same time.

1. **Question:** Mr. Frank Tietie: can a company be registered with its major object being whistleblowing.
2. Should whistle blowing be incentivized
Answer: Mr. Emenike says incentivizing whistleblowing is not bad as it gives people a reason to blow the whistle.
3. **Question:** Isioma from National Human Rights Commission: Can the National Human Rights Commission draft a Whistle Blowing Policy seeing as there exists no legal framework for Whistle Blowing?
Answer: Mr. Emenike says the Bill is being worked on and as such, the NHRC should go ahead and when Bill is enacted, whatever Policy it submits will be looked at in light of the Act.
Another Speaker from the Service Table: says the organization can go ahead to do so as it helps the organization remain true and just and it will be seen as an organizational value.
4. Mr. Gabriel Executive Director, Whistle Blowers Network opined that it is possible to register a company for the purpose of whistle blowing as they have done that before. He then posed a question the ICPC and EFCC, that every year we have been told that the Whistle Blowing Bill is with the National Assembly, what can be done to expedite the passage of that Bill.
Answer: Mr. Emenike says what Mr. Gabriel registered is a not-for-profit and is different from a company for profit. Though there is nothing wrong with registering the company, it may have its bad sides. On the issue of passage of the Bill, the National Assembly is doing all it can to get the laws passed before the end of this National Assembly to ensure a strong framework for anti-corruption efforts.
5. An online participant, Mr. Godwin Okpene asked what kind of communication strategy is in place to conscientize civil servants on their roles under this whistle blowers regime, given the fact of their orientation with the Official Secrecy Oath. Mr. Frank said, it should be looked at in light of the Freedom of Information Act.

11.0 CONCLUSION

The Compere informed the gathering that the Report of the 3rd National Corruption Survey is available online.

Mr. Charles Abana, on behalf of the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT), thanked all participants and the development partners like the EU, UNODC, the MacArthur Foundation, Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption (RoLAC II) Programme, and the Centre for Democracy and Development for their support in organizing the event. He also appreciated the presence of the Heads of agencies and the resource persons for their impactful insights. He also expressed gratitude to the online participants who took time to join. He urged all to make time to join a subsequent event that will be coming up later in the year. The event ended at 1.17 pm.