



PRESS STATEMENT

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Shocking Revelations of Corruption in NIA: President Buhari Must Stop the Ravaging Cabal Now!

The Resource Centre for Human Rights & Civic Education (CHRICED) is seriously concerned about emerging revelations of corruption and abuse of office at the National Intelligence Agency (NIA). If the briefing note submitted to the National Assembly by the immediate past Acting Director-General of NIA is anything to go by, President Muhammadu Buhari must ensure heads begin to roll immediately to salvage his administration's anti-corruption crusade. For key and trusted appointees of the President to be fingered in the kind of egregious abuse of office that have been detailed by the former Acting Director-General, is to say the least, most damaging to the anti-graft war. It is strange that some of the characters that have become synonymous with serious abuse of their official positions, as the President's trusted appointees, have again been identified as the alleged perpetrators of these despicable acts at the NIA. For instance, the President's Chief of Staff, Abba Kyari who has continually been alleged to be involved in various corruption scandals is reported to be the mastermind of the attempt to steal \$44million recovered from the Ikoyi house of former head of NIA, Mr. Ayo Oke. The same Abba Kyari is alleged to be involved in other monumental scandals, including the non-remittance of funds generated by NNPC to the Treasury Single Account (TSA), and the shady deals, which were reported to have been designed to help telecoms giant, MTN escape a fine slammed on it by the government. It is clear that to all intents and purposes, this key figure in the administration is not on the same page with his principal, the President on the need to deal a lethal blow to the monster of corruption. Nigerians are therefore at a loss as to why the President continues to keep people whose tendencies have been so toxic to public confidence in the fight against corruption.

Another issue that has come out clearly from the situation at the NIA is the fact that there are many who have been given serious national assignments, who see those important opportunities for national service as opportunities to enrich themselves. A clear instance is the Presidential Panel chaired by Baba Gana Kingibe, which the President appointed to scrutinize the NIA and make recommendations, especially after the Ikoyi dollar scandal. That some key members of that Panel, including the Chairman, Baba Gana Kingibe, were allegedly pressuring the former Acting Head of the Agency to convert public monies for their personal use goes to show the depth of decay they further sought to inflict on the agency. This integrity deficit shows that they were not selected for that assignment on the basis of merit and intention to serve the nation. It is shameful that it is individuals like these, who see national assignments as opportunities for personal enrichment that got the nod to be on such a sensitive committee. The ball is now in the President's court to ensure an immediate surgery is performed on his administration to weed out these corrupt and unpatriotic elements.

CHRICED is also of the view that the former Acting Head of the Agency who did his best to resist the evil and corrupt machinations of some of these individuals to steal public funds, should be protected, and not vilified. In fact, his courage to speak out in the face of the manipulations by these corrupt elements should be rewarded in line with the Whistleblower Policy of the government. Importantly too, the President has a responsibility to immediately boot out all corrupt elements, especially those within his inner circle, that have constituted themselves into a credibility problem for a major focus of

his administration, which is the fight against corruption. The allegations detailed in the document before the National Assembly is clear pointer to the fact that the President needs to as a matter of urgency overhaul the machinery of governance. Particularly for an elite agency responsible for the nation's external intelligence, it would be too unfortunate to leave it in the hands of people who see it as a cash cow, rather than an institution for protecting the national interest.

A stitch in time, as the saying goes, saves nine.

Long live the Federal Republic of Nigeria!

Signed

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