

DORO CORRUPTION





Title Subtitle

Say No Campaign Collective Action Against Corruption March

IN THIS ISSUE



Commemorating the International Anticorruption day, Say No Campaign held a march in Abuja, the capital state of Nigeria on Friday the 8th of December 2017, in collaboration with Civil Society Organizations including Centre for Transparency Advocacy (CTA), Civil Society for Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), Protest to Power (P2P), Youth Initiative for Advocacy Growth and Advancement (YIAGA) and AFRIMIL, Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC)

media partners also attended by private individuals.

The March which was themed Collective Action Against Corruption, had participants converged at Unity Fountain Abuja to collectively walk to the secretariat carrying banners, placards wearing T-shirts with various inscriptions sensitizing Nigerians on corruption, expressing dissatisfaction with the handling of critical corruption cases, stating demands for the anticorruption fight, demonstrating the need for all Nigerians to join and own the process of the anticorruption fight.

At the commencement of the March, co conveners of Say No Campaign addressed the participants on the relevance of the March and the overall International Anticorruption Day. Participants were admonished to actively engage political leaders and public institutions to ensure quality leadership and delivery of service. The necessity of organised protest and the unification of voices to pressurize government to deliver on democratically acceptable gains was highlighted and emphasized. The conveners stressed on the need for citizens to monitor government activities, policies, budget, expenditure and implementation to ensure that there are in tandem with the articulated needs of the masses.

Co conveners also advised Nigerians against political apathy, emphasizing that corruption will only thrive amid silence and public display of gross indifference. Co conveners maintained that the masses are at the receiving end of corruption, noting that the consequences of corruption are seen in the dilapidated public infrastructures, failed healthcare system, death trapped roads, non-payment of salaries however meagre, spasmodic power supply, unproductive educational system, non-implementation of projects and a total failure of government.

Addressing the media, Co conveners of Say No Campaign stressed that the International Anticorruption Day, provides the leadership of

the country the opportunity for repentance and total cleansing of the system. It affords the chance to assess the anticorruption fight, reflect on challenges diminishing the fight and reinvigorate the commitment of government to fight corruption in the country. It also avails citizens, especially civil societies and media, the opportunity to renew strength and steer the wheels of the crusade in the right direction for sustainability.

Participants expressed their disappointments with the ongoing fight against corruption in a peaceful demonstration through the streets of Abuja with the support of the state security operatives, to the Federal Secretariat.

Concluding the march at the Federal Secretariat, participants challenged the government of Nigeria to intensify its commitment to eradicate corruption in the country by upholding accountability and ensuring Justice for every Nigerian. Participants also expressed their resolve to actively engage the anticorruption fight by demanding for the prosecution and conviction of corrupt officials perceived to be most favoured by the current leadership of the country.

Participants promised more protests and clamour for good leadership and adequate implementation of projects by governments. Similarly, participants resolved to utilize their voting power more wisely in electing credible representatives in the subsequent elections to be held in the country.

The march which lasted for three hours, starting from nine o'clock am to 12 noon, witnessed a unification of voices of civil society organizations, labour groups, security operatives, media partners and private citizens concerned about eradicating corruption from Nigeria and addressing the challenges of the ongoing anticorruption fight. Individuals expressed their disappointments with the progression of the anticorruption campaign, challenged the government to pick up momentum and resolved to intensify their demands for a better society.



State of the North East IDP Camps



Say no Campaign in collaboration with the Centre for Peace Studies Modibbo Adama University of Technology Yola, Adamawa State, held a town hall meeting on the 12th of December 2017 at the Homtel Derivatives and Suites Yola. The event, which was supported by MacArthur Foundation had participants from IDP camps, academia, civil society organizations, religious groups, state government officials and private individuals in the North-East region of Nigeria. The town hall discussion was focused on corruption issues in IDP camps in the North-East region of Nigeria. Participants extensively deliberated on issues relating to transparency and accountability in the distribution of humanitarian resources to IDP camps; food relief and medical supplies; disbursement and utilization of funds; sexual assault and exploitation perpetrated by camp officials and security operatives, Insecurity and sanitary conditions in the camps.

Participants noted with concern the inadequacy associated with the dissemination of factual and empirical information on the return of internally displaced persons to their homes, thereby shutting down most IDP camps. However, participants noted that most camps are still operational and displaced persons are constantly being received by camp officials; they noted that corruption in IDP camps is a systemic problem involving collaboration of critical stakeholders of IDP camps like the government, INGOs, CSOs and camp officials, from the point of supply of relief materials, transit and to the camp site, officials connived and diverted supplies, commercialized them for personal gains;

Participants also noted that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) receive funds from foreign donors to supply food and medical relief to IDP camps, but rather than deliver, they merely hoisted banners to feign delivery while these materials ended up in their private clinics and in market places; they also noted that INGOs connived with government officials to divert resources meant for IDP camps, reiterating that INGOs came through government structures, which have already influenced the management of IDP camps and cut deals with government officials to side-line some IDPs termed; informal IDP camps, from benefiting from the relief materials supplied, in favour of those IDP camps that are controlled by their accomplices;



Participants noted with great concern that only 20 trucks carrying 600 bags of grains each were delivered to IDP camps out of the 260 trucks of same 600 bags of grains, to be distributed by the Presidential Committee on Emergency Food Distribution in North East; and that camp officials, security operatives and CBOs working at the camps sexually harass women and girls in the camps, solicit for sexual favours in exchange for food and other materials;

Participants restated their displeasure with the delay in the outcome of the investigation ordered by the president on cases of sexual assault of women and girls in the IDPs camps by security operatives, thus, resolved to unify their voices to demand for justice for the victims; they also noted with great concern the alarming increase of HIV positive pregnant women in communities as a derivation of sexual exploitation of women and girls whilst in the camp; and they expressed deep concern over the absence of an Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) desk, Independence Corrupt Practices and other related Offences Commission (ICPC) presence at the camps to provide oversight function in the management of IDP camps.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Participants urged the media to engage in investigative journalism to report facts and shadow the reports provided by government in respect of IDP camps rather than rely on press statements from government officials on the affairs of IDP camps in North East or any other issue of corruption;

Participants resolved to have a third-party monitoring system to track information from the sources of relief materials through transit to camp sites to aid transparency and accountability in the management of relief materials donated to IDP camps;

Participants reaffirmed that CSOs bribed camps officials to corroborate their reports in order to receive more grants. However, they resolved to blow the whistle on CSOs engaging in such fraudulent practices; and they urged camp officials and media partners with CSOs to investigate these cases and expose the INGOs involved in the act and resolved to form a coalition of civil society organization called 'Corruption Monitoring Unit' to investigate issues of corruption in IDP camps around the region and demand for accountability and justice;

Participants urged the vice president to investigate the whereabouts of the remaining trucks each carrying 600 bags of grains and every official involved in the scam should be held accountable in pursuit of justice in the interest of the anticorruption campaign;

Similarly, participants resolved to investigate the diversion of over 200 trucks by making an FOI request on the details of the special intervention scheme to IDP camps in North East.

Participants also reiterated media partnership with CSOs in the anticorruption campaign to amplify such cases of corruption and call on government to hold culprits accountable; also resolved to build capacity of CSOs to actively engage in citizen journalism to mobilize Nigerians in a collective effort against corrupt practices in the camps, communities and states;

Participants resolved that FIDA should intensify its effort to communicate with victims of sexual exploitation at the camp, follow those cases to a logical conclusion and secure justice for them;

Participants also resolved to employ more tenaciously the instrument of protest to demand accountability and justice for the vulnerable in camps and communities;

Participants noted that the state government is abdicating its responsibility to NGOs and displaying a worrisome lack of willingness to address the misery of IDPs by poorly funding the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) with a paltry one million naira in 6 months;

Participants emphasized that this attitude fatigues the international donor organizations working in Nigeria;

Participants therefore, resolved to unify their voices as a coalition to pressurize government to strengthen its institutions and provide adequate funding for agencies to avoid making them vulnerable to illicit deals but responsive to Nigerians in distress; and Therefore, participants urged government to mount EFCC and ICPC desk in all IDP camps owned by government or religious groups to monitor activities in the camps, investigate and prosecute cases of corruption in the IDP camps.

CONCLUSION

Participants was concerned about the waning passion of activism amongst CSOs and urged all CSOs to consider activism as sacred calling to sanitize the process of governance to improve the society for the benefit of the people. Therefore, participants resolved to passionately engage activism and oversight government activities to raise red flags on corruption.