

*A Remark by*

*His Excellency*

**Dr. Kayode Fayemi, *CON***

*Governor, Ekiti State, Nigeria*

As Special Guest of Honour

 at the

**2ND NATIONAL SUMMIT ON DIMINISHING CORRUPTION IN PUBLIC SECTOR**

**Organised by**

**Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC)**

*Abuja / Nigeria. Monday, September 28, 2020*

**Protocols**

1. I am highly delighted to be here to be part of the epoch making event that marks the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Commission. I commend former President Olusegun Obasanjo, whose first executive bill to the first Senate of the 4th Republic was the Independent Corruption and other Related Commission establishment bill, for his visionary effort in our ever evolving fight against corruption.
2. It is almost unbelievable that 20 years have since passed that Late Justice Mustapha Akanbi, the incorruptible pioneer Chairman of the Commission began the journey of building this glorious Commission from the scratch.
3. I pay due cognizance to his pioneering and towering role, a solid foundation which was built upon by Justice Emmanuel Ayoola, and other great personalities such as Prof. Uriah Angulu, Dr. Rose Abang-Wushishi, Mr. Abdullahi Bako, Esq and Mr. Ekpo Nta who handed over to the current Chairman of the Commission.
4. I am not surprised by the progress that the current leadership under Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye, has made. He is someone whose reputation as a man of solid integrity preceded his appointment. His stint at the Presidential Advisory Committee against Corruption (PACAC) where he discharged himself creditably, readily recommended him for his current role. I am doubly sure that he would make a significant breakthrough in the war against corruption in Nigeria during his tenure.
5. Today’s event is indeed, an eloquent testimony to the innovation which the current leadership of ICPC has brought into the war. I understand this is the 2nd Summit on Diminishing Corruption in Public Sector, a strategic idea that is meant to bring together, stakeholders in assessing, reviewing and setting agenda for a corruption-free Nigeria.
6. This Summit is a commendable one for it provides a platform for the critical actors in policy, governance, enforcement and adjudication to take a hindsight, insight and foresight view of the war so as to continue to responsively reinvigorate the fight against corruption.
7. Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, permit me to make a few remarks on the fight against corruption in our country, especially as it relates to ICPC and its mandate.
8. It is beyond debate to acknowledge the many successes that the ICPC has recorded in the discharge of its mandate since its existent. The Commission has done fairly and commendably well in prosecution, surveillance and policy advocacy.
9. In spite of this, and even though ICPC has a broader mandate and wider jurisdiction of coverage, than other anti-corruption agencies, there is this general perception that the Commission is not as visible and aggressive as others.
10. Although, it is often suggested that the foundational leadership of the Commission being retired judges were more reflective, thorough and less combative in their approach to their work. It is my considered opinion that the Commission should strive to align its strategy with public expectation, in terms of perception of its presence and effectiveness.
11. Irrespective of the perception of its effectiveness, the reality however, is that, ICPC generally gets more convictions in cases it pursues in the courts. This testimonial is a commendable one but I also think the ICPC needs to be more visible and forceful in the public space. Its mere presence should send jitters and serve as a deterrent to probable suspects.
12. Furthermore, I hold the view that the most important aspect of law enforcement is crime prevention. There is therefore, the need for government at all levels to tap into the powerful tools of information and communication technology to ensure that exposure to corrupt practices are very minimal.
13. One of the ways to actualise this is to ensure that government businesses are fully digitized and interaction between clients and government service providers are almost nil. This is because, at the roots of all corrupt practices is the desire to take advantage of the people because of the physical interactions that often bring about compromises.
14. Therefore, the more we deploy communication technology to reduce tempting interactions, the more we are able to diminish corruption. And the cheaper and more effective will ICPC and other sister agencies become.
15. This is a major focus at the Nigeria Governors Forum where transparency and accountability in service delivery are crucial hallmarks of my tenure as Chairman. For example, we are working with the World Bank to implement SFTAS -, States Fiscal Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability project whose primary objective is to strengthen fiscal transparency, accountability and sustainability in participating states. All our states are participating in this and it has significantly improved the institutionalization of anti-corruption and governance frameworks. In Ekiti, openness is at the core of governmental values. We deliberately promote and ensure that government businesses are conducted transparently. We have not only enlisted in the SFTAS program, we have also joined the Open Government Partnership. Some of the ways we have achieved this is through our integrated payroll payment system and our transparent procurement system. Our procurement system is conducted virtually through our Bureau of Public Procurement’s portal. Our tender system is also competitive and transparent. Winners of bidders, contract terms, thresholds, mileage and other details relating to a contract can be easily obtained through Ekiti State website: [www.ekitistate.gov.ng](http://www.ekitistate.gov.ng) or the BPP’s portal. This is now becoming the rule than the exception in all our states.
16. We also ensure that job application into our services are competitive and conducted virtually through independent entities which conduct interview examination for our prospective employees. Through this, we have eliminated influence peddling, nepotism, and extortion. Promotion in the services is strictly merit driven and subject to successes in the relevant examinations. We are also currently working on an e-government system in our relentless commitment to make government more open and accessible to the citizenry.
17. Another thing that needs to be quickly worked upon is our national identity management system. Financial and violent crimes will be hugely diminished if we can bring everybody under a single digital identification roof that permeates and integrates every aspect of our daily life.
18. We have no excuse than to get it right under this dispensation. The fish they say always rots from the head. We are lucky that we have a head in the country who personifies the hallmarks of integrity and anti-corruption. I know him fairly well and served under him as a Minister for three years. I never received a note from him nor a directive to do anything that's abhorrent to my conscience, nor against the law. He simply represents our very best in moral leadership and ethical conduct and all in positions of authority should not entertain any fears in doing that which is right and lawful.
19. I am more than sure that with the array of experts and highly resourceful persons present in this Summit, we will generate useful ideas and set a new template that will strengthen the fight against corruption in our country.
20. In conclusion, I like to congratulate the board, management and staff of the ICPC for the successes of the past twenty years since establishment and wish you more wins in the years ahead.
21. Thank you for your attention.

**Dr. Kayode Fayemi, *CON***

*Governor of Ekiti State and Chairman of NGF*

Abuja

Monday, September 28, 2020.