

**THE ROLE OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL AND THE
CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA USING GENERAL
SANI ABACHA AS A CASE STUDY**

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FACULTY OF ARTS
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BENIN CITY**

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**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ARTS
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the project was carried out by **VICTOR CHINEDU IBEH** of the Department of History and International studies, faculty of Arts, University of Benin under my supervision

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Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God Almighty

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This study examines the consequences of corruption in Nigeria as regard to Transparency International report, using General Sani Abacha administration as a case study. Nigeria is the most populous black nation with an estimated population of 150 million people and still growing. It has a population larger than sixteen West African Countries put together which makes it a very important player not only within West Africa but Africa in general.

Nigeria is blessed with human and material resources. Consequent upon this, it is expected that a larger population of the country lives in affluence, ironically preponderance of Nigerian population live in abject poverty. Poverty has pervaded the entire segment of the country. Surprisingly, democratic system of government has not suppressed the virulent growth of poverty in Nigeria. There are more questions than answers. For instance, it is aptly correct to ask: why poverty amidst plenty in Nigeria? Corruption has become a popular phenomenon in the nation's political system. It has indeed become a society-induced activity in the sense that, it now enjoys popular support from the people, invariably, corruption has been democratized. This happens as a result of the

inability to capture and understand the generic meaning of corruption, which has further given it a toga of social recognition and acceptance in all the societies within the country. Although, corruption is a global phenomenon, it occurs in monarchy, democracies and military dictatorships; at all levels of development and in all types of economic systems from open capitalist economies to centrally planned economies. The fact remains that corruption differs widely in its forms, pervasiveness and consequences, in developed countries the effect may be less severe, while in developing countries particularly African continent where the effect may be too severe for citizens to bear, as demonstrated. In Nigeria, corruption affects every facet of human development. Little wonder, the Transparency International (TI), an NGO of international repute continue to rate and score Nigeria high among the corrupt countries in the world. The futile attempt by the government to fight the cankerworm stems from the fact that government itself is greatly infected with the virus and an average Nigeria is seen as corrupt in most parts of the world. It is against this background that this chapter examines the causes, types and effects of corruption. And the various ways of achieving corruption free society through the recommendations capable of reducing the practice corruption.

Aim and Objectives

The aim and objectives are

1. To examine the role of transparency international and the consequences of corruption in Nigeria
2. To examine the evolution of Transparency International
3. To examine the emergence of General Sani Abacha Administration
4. To examine the role of Transparency International in General Sani Abach Administration

Scope of Study

The scope of this study is centred on role of transparency international and the consequences of corruption in Nigeria using General Sani Abacha as a case study and also General Sani Abacha's response to corruption from 1993-1998.

Research Methodology

Historical research method is used in carrying out this study. However, a critical examination of corruption in Nigeria from 1993 to 1998, and will be analysed using secondary sources that provide detailed information regarding the two regimes under study. Books, journals, conference proceedings and internet sources will be used in this work.

Literature Review

There are numerous literatures on the topic of corruption, Transparency international and the dictatorship regime of General Sani Abacha in Nigeria. However there are few literature that dealt with the role of Transparency International in fighting corruption under the Abacha's regime, for a better understanding on the consequences of corruption in Nigeria it is right to understand corruption in Nigeria.

Corruption is the biggest problem Nigeria has, a bane to good governance, which has invariably translated into corrosive and perpetual poverty among the citizenry. This is as a result of the fact that the money that is supposed to be expended on social needs and infrastructures to engender development circulates among and within the few privileged and thereafter, taken abroad for investment.

Corruption as a concept seems difficult to define. Its high degree of relativity has attracted the use of methodological pluralism by scholars to scientifically explain the concept. There have been various definitions and explanations attached to it. For the purpose of this study, we are going to bring up some of the definitions of corruption for better understanding of this work.

According to Gyekyein *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*, gives the idea of corruption in Africa. He

writes that “Post Colonial Africa is among the worst victims of political corruption. It probably constitutes the most serious source of the financial haemorrhage suffered by developing nations in Africa, also the most common cause of the military overthrow of civilian governments in Africa with the consequent disruption of the democratic political process”.¹ Thus, corruption is the greatest and most serious disease of governments in Africa; hence, it is the greatest obstacle on path to development.

Kolawole, in his paper titled “Military in Politics”, sees corruption as a crucial factor that breeds military intervention. In his analysis, he believes corruption can be monetary or otherwise. It may be in form of using money to pollute the political landscape and suppressing independent thoughts and behavior. It may also be in form of the suppression physically of all forms of opposition and thereby creating a state of political disorder.²

In the same vein, Mimiko in his article titled “From Neo-Regulation to guided Deregulation: The Nigerian Economy in transition, 1993-1998”, traces the institutionalization of corruption to Babangida regime when he opines that; Under the eight-year rule of Ibrahim Babangida, corruption virtually became the rule. Official corruption was more or less legalized as government itself took the lead in what became known as the “settlement syndrome”³

Ajayi K. In his book titled *Theory and Practice of Local Government in Nigeria, Ado Ekiti*, state that corruption is perceived as a cetaceous malaise in all sectors of Nigerian society. It is more noticeable in the public service sector including the Local Government service.⁴ He further observed that, corruption by political and civil official's manifests in various dimensions such as embezzlement of public funds, misappropriation, inflation and indiscriminate re-evaluation of contracts and collaboration with contractors who may later pay kickbacks and percentage commissions to relevant officials and invariably leading to failed contracts and abandoned projects.⁵

In 1993, Transparency International, an organization dedicated to curbing corruption, was formed and has become one of the leading resources for corruption researchers. The organization's website provides corruption surveys, country and issues papers, and other publications relevant to academics and practitioners worldwide.

Emery Brusset et.al in a report titled "Evaluation of Transparency International" gives a detail account on the origin of Transparency International as: TI was founded in Berlin in 1993 by Peter Eigen, a former World Bank executive, together with a group of like-minded individuals with extensive international experience. These included Fritz Heimann, a senior legal counsel from General Electric; Kamal Hossain, a Bangladeshi former minister; Michael Hershman a

US-based security specialist; Joe Githongo, the head of a Kenyan accountancy firm; Frank Vogl, a former Information Director of the World Bank and others.⁶

The report further gives a general overview on the day-to-day activities of the organisation and the structure of administration and how independent the corruption watchdog organisation operates.

Transparency International has sponsored the vast majority of the research into fighting corruption, also seeking to describe the relationship between the human right and corruption. Laurence Cockcroft, in *Corruption and Human Rights: a Crucial Link*, asserts that the human rights movement and anti-corruption movement have a lot in common.⁷ He suggests that transparency and accountability are correlated with both greater respect for human rights and lower levels of corruption. Cockcroft believes that making advances in the human rights and anti-corruption movements is dependent on the responsible development of national integrity by civil society.

One tool use by Transparency International to measure the level of corruption in a country is called Corruption Perception Index, this Index is used by the Transparency International in ranking countries on issues of transparency, competitiveness and investment-friendly. The CPI of Nigeria was captured Salisu, M.A. in "Corruption in Nigeria", in which he states that: "Transparency International, a non-government organization using what is termed Corruption

Perception Index (CPI) categorized Nigeria as first in the ranking of corrupt nations of the world in the year 2000. In 1999, Nigeria was ranked 98 out of the 99 countries.⁸

As at 1996 the corruption index in Nigeria average 20.48 points from 1996 until 2017, reaching an all time high of 28 points in 2016 and a record record low of 6,90 points in 1996.⁹

Time it has been in Nigeria when a Head of State was reported to have paid a total sum of N12.4 billion between September 1988 and 30th June, 1994 into a “Special Dedicated Account”, funds which under normal conditions should have been paid into the Federal Accounts as required by law,¹⁰ Out of this amount, the report further reveals that the military President and the Governor of the Central Bank clandestinely disbursed N12.2 billion without any explanation as to the extra budgetary expenditures.¹¹

Reviewing literature on Sani Abacha foreign policy will shows that the foreign policy of Abacha’s Nigeria was a reflection of his personality as a dictator for his quest to hold power at all cost.

Komolafe Ajayi in his article titled “Nigeria’s Foreign Policy and Image Crisis” was able to explain the situation of Nigerians under Abacha regime, which he state that “Under General Abacha regime (1993-1998), no single effort was

made, toward addressing Nigeria's image problem with rest of the world. Governance in Nigeria was generally a disaster. The government became a weapon of punishment, harassment, impoverishment, oppression and intimidation, to Nigerians and others."¹²

He further state that response of the international community to Abacha regime, he asserted that: This situation generate stiff and consistent oppositions from the international community and well meaning individuals, who scarifies their lives, by exploring ways to put an end to General Abacha regime, and subsequently, before the enthronement of civilian democratic governance, in Nigeria. Thus, these efforts by Nigerians had little or no impact on the regime of General Abacha. The sanctions impose on the military junta by the international community; force the regime to align itself with fellow pariah states of Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Libya, and Sudan"¹³

The immediate response of the international community to the execution of the Ogoni leaders strategy of the international community was to isolate Nigeria. The Canadian government closed its high commission in Nigeria, South Africa severed ties with Abacha's government and the American and British authorities imposed full military and limited economic sanctions in order to frustrate and, in the process, compel the military government to change its unpopular style of administration.

H. Saliu in “An Agenda for Nigeria’s Foreign Policy till the Year 2000” agrees to the rate of human right abuse by the dictatorial regime of Abacha; “The gross human rights abuse, ridiculous transition to civil rule program under General Abacha and many instances of diplomatic failures in management of the image problem fuelled the collective western condemnation and accentuated the resolve to dismantle the military fortress in Nigeria’s political capital. The highpoint of the regime’s blunders was the negligence of global plea for clemency in the death sentence passed on the Ogoni environmental rights leaders, their subsequent hanging and alleged sponsorship of assassinations of perceived political enemies.¹⁴

The regime in this regard decided to move eastward and maintain an isolation policy. This idea of isolation by General Abacha was in retaliation to the western policy on Nigeria, i.e. Nigeria only recognize countries that are friendly to her. General Abacha has made no effort to address Nigeria’s problems and this made the international community to isolate Nigeria and was given the status of a Pariah State.

It is against this backdrop that the role of Transparency international and the consequence of corruption in Nigeria under General Sani Abacha administration from 1993 – 1998 that this reviewed literatures and other that will be encounter will be used in the course of this study

Chapterization

This study is divided into five chapters.

CHAPTER ONE: Background to the Study

This chapter begins with an introduction which gives a general background to the study. It also contains the objectives of the study, scope of study, literature review, methodology, and chapters' outline.

CHAPTER TWO: Evolution of Transparency International

This chapter examines and provides a comprehensive detail on the activities of Transparency International as a watchdog against corruption.

CHAPTER THREE: Emergence of General Sani Abacha Administration

This chapter focuses on the emergence of General Sani Abacha Administration and also the various factors: internal and external, that shaped Nigeria's foreign policy during his administration.

CHAPTER FOUR: Transparency International and General Sani Abacha Administration

This chapter gives a critical analysis of the role of Transparency International against corruption in Nigeria during General Sani Abacha administration also the consequences and response of the international community.

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion

This chapter gives a summary and conclusion of the study.

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CHAPTER TWO

EVOLUTION OF TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL

Origin of Transparency International

Transparency international, briefly (TI), is a non-governmental organisation with seat, acting world-wide, in Berlin which engages itself in national and international and economical corruption fight and raising the awareness of it. This includes, but not limited to political corruption, it publishes yearly its corruption perception index, a comparative listing of corruption worldwide.

Transparency international was created in 1993 in Berlin friends from all over the world engaged by the former director of world Bank Peter Eigen and developed in shortest time to one most influential non-profit and partly-political independent movement of the most recent time, which can be compared concerning its political influence, for instance with Attic or Amnesty international. The head office of Transparency international and Transparency International Germany are in Berlin¹.

The cause for the establishment of the organisation was the idea, the world corruption, which had accepted unbelievable extents and effect in the time of the cold war to fight by independent influencing control of an outstanding and particularly control instance standing for itself.

The worldwide importance on the establishment of transparency international in the year 1993 was unexpected. Due to the fact that nations were

face with different economic stagnation which was caused by the corrupt activities by their political leaders, also the fall of the iron curtain and the United States of America idea of the wind of democracy that blew across the world needed to be upheld. The idea of transparency international fell on fruitful soil, however in response also defense and criticism provoked.²

Philosophy of Transparency International and Its Proceedings

Transparency International already carries the basic concept in the name. In the variety of the different kind of corruption is according to the principles of the organisation as large common denominator, when solution, to prevent simple transparency in handling the things crucially, which it makes possible, corruption leads into constructional courses. Because so paradoxically has from the point of view of this system also reduced corruption in society and economics their sense. It is the symptoms for a malfunction in the system and if one liked to fight corruption, one must extract their fertile soil from her: By consistent disclosure and transparency of the things and linear path by current control by independent supervision, by persuasive power and acceptance opposite concerning and authors. By careful selection and rotation of the personnel within the ranges concerned. Multi-eye principle with financial effective control decision Complete documentation, particularly in the assignment and procurement area.³

Most corruption accusation take place under poverty suffer on international level in state (south America, Africa). One of these states formed a proper vicious circle from poverty and corruption, which from own Kraft of the states hardly more is to be broken through and it makes susceptible thereby for outside political influencing control. When the fact appear particularly paradoxical that a certain “corruption impact is already presupposed” in investment funds (usually 10% of the sum total).⁴

Financed in development assistance project usually from tax funds to be the same country the corruption again. Hence, it most often in interest of foreign ruling powers or companies to promote the corruption in a country to induce if not straight, in order to enrich itself.

The beginning of transparency international is not confrontative but consenstative contrary to Amnesty international of Green peace, D. H. the government or to stand comparing head as supporters and aids on an equal footing in things corruption to the side and meet them with reason and understanding. A beginning that always does not become and pretty often in the cross fire of the criticism was gladly seen stands. Straight of others non-governmental organisation (NGO), like Attac or Green peace, those their popularity from the power of the mass and the road refer. Peter Eigen justifies this proceeding with his origin.⁵

Organisational Role

Transparency International (TI) as a group of some 100 national chapters, with an international secretariat in Berlin, Germany originally founded in Germany in May 1993 as a not for profit organisation TI is now an international non-governmental organisation (NGO's) and claims to be moving towards a completely democratic structure TI say of itself.⁶

Transparency international is a global network, civil organisation leading the fight against corruption it brings people together in a powerful worldwide coalition to end the devastating impact of corruption on men, women and children around the world. TI's mission is to "create change toward a world free of corruption".⁷

Transparency international is a global network fighting corruption in national arena in number of ways. They bring together relevant player from government civil society, business and the media to promote transparency in elections, in public administration in procurement and in business. TI global network of chapters and contact also use advocacy campaign to lobby governments to implement anti-corruption reforms.

Politically non-partisan, TI does not undertake investigation of alleged corruption or expose individual cases, but as time were work in coalition with

organizations that do. It develops tools in fighting corruption and work with other civil society organizations, companies and government to implement them. TI is a non-partisan and to build coalition against corruption. Transparency international has the skills tools, expertise and broad participation to fight corruption on the ground as well as through global and regional initiative.⁸

Functions and Goals

- It help design and implement system for financial and administrative oversight of grants and project of the Americas Department (one country and multi-country) and provides administrative and logistical support to two senior programmed co-coordinators;
- Being the lead co-coordinator, including financial and administrative management and monitoring of activities and result of the grants provided to TI nations in the Americas through the TI Anti-corruption. Delivery change (AD:DC) global programmes; and
- Provide lead logistical supervision and co-ordination of key regional meetings.⁹

The principal purpose is the idealistic vision of total and world-wide eliminating of corruption. On the way to this vision TI could already obtain some success and partial success.¹⁰

Financing and Organisation

The foreign officers are subject to bilateral and multilateral financing and organisation. The parent company transparency international attaches importance to the fact that the daughter offices as self-sufficient as possible in its respective homeland or operational areas to become active to be able to sense from country to country and from culture to culture other rules must be considered and be supposed. Also, the definition of corruption is individually made in each country.

Transparency international sub-divide it national offices (national chapters) in groups as regional and working groups which can act drop referred also independently. TI avoids it to interfere directly into the interest of the national chapters and depends on their international work exclusive of their structural so the local civilian – social forces are to be mobilize and promoted.¹¹

The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) besides the World Bank corruption index is the most commonly used measured for corruption in countries worldwide. To form this index, Transparency international complies survey's that ask businessman and analyst book in and outside the countries their analyzing, their perceptions of how a country is. Relying on the numbers of actual corruption cases would not work since law and enforcement of law differ significantly from country to country

In conclusion, transparency international that was founded in Berlin in 1993, has been able to tackle corruption through its various network in the national and international arena, it has been able to bring people together in a powerful worldwide coalition to end the devastating impact of corruption on man, women children around the world free of corruption.

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CHAPTER THREE

EMERGENCE OF GENERAL SANI ABACHA ADMINISTRATION

Introduction

Niccollo Machiavelli, opined in matter relating to power, “that Prince should not deviate from what is good, if that is possible, but he should know how to do evil, if that is necessary”. The leadership of Sani Abacha borrowed a leaf from the above assertion of Niccollo Machiavelli. He was dreaded both nationally and internationally. In his maiden address he stated that: This regime will be firm, humane and decisive. We will not condone nor tolerate any act of indiscipline. Any attempt to test our will, will be decisively dealt with. For the international community, we ask that you suspend judgement while we grapple with the enormous task of nation building, reconciliation and repair. This government is a child of necessity with a strong determination to restore peace and stability to our country and on these foundations, enthrone a lasting and true democracy. Give us the chance to solve our problems in our own way.¹

Under Abacha regime, Nigeria’s external relations underwent the darkest moment in its history. The expectation that Abacha would curry the friendship of the outside world after settling down was shattered with the unveiled confrontational position of his regime. He brooked no contrary opinions whether

from within or without. His regime, as aptly captioned by Kolawole, was “an era in which isolationism was the rule rather than the exception. Diplomacy was replaced by bull fighting. Nigeria was not courting friends but creating enemies”.²

Background of General Sani Abacha and His Rise to Power

General Sani Abacha was born in Kano on 20th September 1943, he is a military leader and a politician, and he was the de-facto president of Nigeria from 1993 to 1998. General Abacha was a Muslim of Kanuri extraction. As a young man, he was trained at various Nigeria and British Military Colleges he joined the Nigeria army and had been promoted to the rank of brigadier general by 1983.

General Sani Abacha was instrumental in the two bloodless military coups de' tat that brought and overthrew General Mohammed Buhari from power in 1983 and 1985 respectively. When General Ibrahim Babangida became president and commander in chief of the armed force of the federal republic of Nigerian 1985, General Abacha was appointed chief of army staff and was appointed minister of defense in 1990³.

It is only appropriate to mention that whilst General Sani Abacha came to power without popular will. His government was seen as one of necessity at that heated period in the immediate aftermath of General Babangida's 8 years rule. It's common knowledge that General Babangida was a populist leader who knew how

to manipulate situation to his advantage but reality on ground showed that most of the issues that shaped the Abacha regime years were unresolved debates and controversies that were consequences of General Babangida's actions and policies.

General Babangida may have had policy master strokes by the release of erstwhile political detainees held by his predecessor General Muhammadu Buhari, farewell party for members of the federal executive council of the deposed military regime of General Buhari, opening of the issue of the international monetary fund loan for public debate and amendment of most of the draconian decrees of the former government. Rallies were often held in the early days of General Babangida's nicety but by the controversial political action he took over time.

The decline of the General Babangida was down to his sudden absolute imperialism falling victim to political Lilliputians, but he eventual transition programme would be his Achilles heel, Babagida initially left no one in doubt as to commitment to hand-over power to a democratic government in 1997, but the promulgation of degree no 25 which banned so many politician and some former public office holders from participating in politics contradicted him. In 1993 the Babangida administration succeeded in organizing Nigeria and arguable Africa's fairest ever election where Chief MKO Abiola emerge winner defecting the national republican connections Basher Tofa. General Babangida amended his

government's "transition to civil rule" programmed sixty two (62) times and critically through his "maradonic political style "made pessimism to reign in the mind of Nigerians hence only a few trusted the sincerity of the government on the transition to civil rule programmed.⁴

In all this, the pathetic situation in the country at that time raise more questions that demand prompt answers. As Suleiman, citizens were frustrated psychologically, economically, politically, a generation of senior military officers lost their lives in a NAFC- 130 aircraft which crashed into a swamp on Saturday 26th of September 1992 in Ejigbo, a Lagos suburb. The state house independence building which was where the ministry of defense was situated was gutted by fire in 1993, the relationship between the government and university lecturers had become irreconcilable, many workers were not paid for months, and insecurity within the landscape. It was this heated polity that necessitated the stepping aside of General Babagida who handed over to chief Ernest Shonekan as interim head of government but was toppled before long (3months) by general Sani Abacha. From inception therefore it could be said that the Abacha government was a product of circumstances and a child of necessity. General Abacha inherited most of General Ibrahim Babangida's policy cobwebs.⁵

General Sani Abacha took over power from the interim government of chief Ernest Shonekan, who was put in place by general Ibrahim Babangida after

annulment of June 12, 1993 presidential election (won by M.K.O Abiola) which caused popular uproar. Abacha's government was accused of rights abuses and violation especially after the hanging of Ogoni Nine activist Ken Saro-Wiwa by the Abacha tribunal coupled with the detention of M.K.O Abiola and Olusegun Obasanjo for treason, while Prof. Wole Soyinka charged in absentia with treason⁶.

General Abacha's government suffered stiff opposition internally and externally by pro-democracy activists who made his regime unpopular and he responded by banning political activities and controlling the media in particular, a significant fraction of the military was fired and Abacha surrounded himself with approximately 3,000 armed men loyal to himself.

Nigeria's foreign policy objectives under Abacha's government were inconsistent, but he supported ECOWAS unconditionally and sent Nigerian troops to Liberia and Sierra Leone to restore democracy, peace and stability. General Sani Abacha was married to Maryam Abacha and they were blessed with seven sons and three daughters.

Nigeria Foreign Relation under General Sani Abacha Regime

What followed under General Sani Abacha were five years of unbridled dictatorship, economic mismanagement, gross human rights abuses and virtually a negation of government. Aiming from the outset to perpetuate his rule, Abacha first dissolved all the elected state and Federal Legislatures and sacked the governors. He then re-enacted the tortuous and wasteful of transition to civil rule including the formation of new political parties, the fashioning of new constitution (1995), election of new local government council, state and federal legislature and governors and, finally, the unprecedented, forced adoption of himself as the sole presidential candidate by the five government approved political parties.⁷

On the foreign scene, the Abacha regime virtually isolated Nigeria from her traditional friends, especially in North America, Europe and Australia. Some of these countries clamped sometime on Nigeria which to her economic hurt. Abacha's sudden death in time 1998 seen by Nigeria as an "act of divine intervention", and the death of Abiola shortly thereafter, effectively helped to pave the way for a return to civil rule.

The period from 1995-1998 witnessed die most reactionary, reckless and abusive foreign policy that the country had ever seen as the country because derided at home and isolated above ¹⁰. Abacha's government was occluded of

human rights abuses, especially after the hanging of Ogoni activist Ken Saro-Wiwa by the Auta tribunal (only one of several cases against opposed to the exploitation of Nigeria land by multinational companies). Abiola and Olusegun Obasanjo were jailed for treason, and Wole Soyinka was charged in absentia with treason. Abacha regime suffer stiff opposition internally and externally by pro-democracy activists who made regime unpopular, and responded by banning political traits in general and by controlling the press in particular. While a significant fraction of the military was fired, and Abacha surrounded himself with approximately 3,000 armed men loyal to himself.⁸

Abacha regime and it Foreign Policy posture was inconsistent and his government was listed as the world's fourth most corrupt in recent history by transparency international in 2004. Even as Gen. Sani Abacha had also literally laughed in the face of any possible sanctions by the United states of America against his government, arguing that the Americans would not do that on account that the oil companies are taking care of the republicans and the congressional black caucus takes cares of the Democrats, and that all American blacks have a due loyalty to African leaders.⁹ The idea of consultation in Nigeria's Foreign Policy could be dated back to the time of Late Prime Minister Tafawa Balewa who, at times consulted London to know what steps to take vis-à-vis certain issues. There is no disputing the fact that Nigeria has responsibilities to Africa. Africa is the centre piece of Nigeria Foreign Policy, what this implies is that Nigeria should

identify with and defend the legitimate interest of Africa collectively and in African State.

Abacha's regime needed to establish legitimacy at home and credibility abroad with the nullification of Nigeria June 12, 1993 presidential election, and in light of human rights abuses and the future to embark on a meaningful democratic transition, the United States imposed numerous sanction on Nigeria. After a period of increasing strained relations, the death of General Abacha opened a new phase of improved bilateral relations¹⁰.

According to Fawole, it is necessary to mention that General Sani Abacha, following in the authoritarian tradition of his military predecessors also enjoyed considerable personnel latitude in the realm of decision making. His powers were virtually unequalled in every respect as he systematically churned out decrees that consolidated his personal grip on powers.

In another position, Akinrinwe Bola alluded that, significantly foreign policy was hardly reckoned with as a challenging method of boosting economic growth and development. Economic diplomacy is putting greater emphasis on diplomatic resources to attract foreign investment and promoting oil-exports, in addition to the export of petroleum products¹². From General Abacha's speech the place of foreign policy clearly point to the little or no importance attached to it. The concentric circle of Nigeria's foreign policy which is Nigeria, West Africa,

and Africa attracted very little enthusiasm. In the words of General Sani Abacha “the external debt overhang remains worrisome” as result of adroit debt management for the first time in over a decade and without fresh debt rescheduling, this government has succeeded in reversing the hands of rising external debt stocks. By implication if government continues as a whole, the intervention of IMF not necessary.

Consequently Nigeria’s foreign policy under General Abacha could not be objectively appreciated. The people were hostile to the country’s foreign policy posture, arguing that Nigeria’s intervention in the crisis in Liberia and Sierra Leone was unwarranted: educational problems, poor infrastructure, poverty, high infant mortality, energy crisis etc are issues that Nigerians believe should here attracted greater attention and funding as mark of government concern for the people of Nigeria before going to Liberia and Sierra Leone.

The government of Abacha had also an unprecedented and yet unsurpassed record of human rights abuses in Nigeria’s political history. This drew Nigeria into more conflicts with the outside world. Instead of the usual old alliance with United States of America, Britain and other western nations, the regime embarked on new found diplomatic romance with pariah countries like Libya, Iraq, China, Sudan, Iran, North Korea, Malaysia and others. There was

therefore no way the national interest of Nigeria could be improved, for most of these nations also depended on the West for their economic survival¹³.

Apart from arresting former political leaders and other blunders by the government of Abacha, in a flagrant display of arrogance and diplomatic indecorum, he executed Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight kinsmen of his against responsible public opinion and world-wide plea for leniency. The killing of Saro-Wiwa and eight Ogoni prominent activists on November 10 1995 was described by international leaders as callous and indicting. Saro-Wiwa, a world famous writer, poet and playwright was an intellectual arrowhead of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People. The organisation was formed in 1990 with the mandate to champion the demands of the oil-bearing Ogoni communities in the Niger Delta region for the protection of their environment and compensation for ruination caused to their environment and livelihood.¹⁴

The fatally flawed trials and the death sentences by hanging pronounced on Saro- Wiwa and eight other Ogoni citizens were upheld by the Provisional Ruling Council and to the consternation of the international community, were hanged barely 48 hours. The hanging attracted worldwide condemnation and this action earned Nigeria a suspension from the Commonwealth by Commonwealth Heads of State and Government which met at Auckland, New Zealand in 1995. The suspension was for two years for a start, while other sanctions were being

contemplated. The Commonwealth merely invoked its 1991 Harare Declaration enjoying members to promote democracy, good governance and human rights.

Instead of the government of Abacha to take necessary measures to re-right the wrong done on the Ogoni people and the international system, the country Foreign Affairs Minister in person of Chief Tom Ikimi, moulted the most abusive diplomatic abuse against perceived and imaginary enemies of the government. He poured invectives on the then South African president, Nelson Mandela, for advocating sanctions against Nigeria. In one of his remarks on Mandela, he retorted: We in Nigeria have held President Nelson Mandela in high esteem. Nevertheless, our experience as a people and a nation in world affairs, tell us that the successful struggle for liberation does not automatically endow a newcomer to international arena with all the manners to perform creditably. And also, whoever gave the South African President the song sheet to read has not done him honour.¹⁵

On the organization of Commonwealth, Ikimi said: You should know that the Commonwealth really is not a serious Organization. They have done nothing for Nigeria. They have only come out with declaration or statement which they cannot carry out.¹⁶

Therefore, it is difficult, to classify the Abacha era's foreign policy as a success story in any meaningful way. The government of Abacha left Nigeria's image both internal and internationally battered and with no sense of direction. His death was welcome not only by the people of Nigeria, but internationally.

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CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL AND GENERAL SANI ABACHA ADMINISTRATION

Corruption in Nigeria

The history of corruption is as old as the world because ancient civilization have traces of widespread illegality and corruption thus, lipset and Lenz not that” corruption has been ubiquitous in complex societies from ancient Egypt, Israel and Greece down to the present”.⁶ Corruption is also believed to be in any continent, region, and ethnic group. It cut across faith religious denominations and all system and affects both young and old, man and woman alike. Corruption is found in democracy and dictatorial politics feudal, capitalist and socialist economics, Christian, Muslim, Buddhist culture are equally bedevilled by corruption. This does not, however mean that the incidence and magnitude of corrupt activities are the same in every society. Some countries are more corrupt than others. “As George Orwell notes in his book, Animals farm. All animals are equals, but some animals are more equal than others.

Though, (corruption) seen as global phenomenon but it is more devastating to the developing economic and to the so-call “Third world”. However, corruption is pandemic in Nigeria and in many other African and Asian

Countries and their leaders as well as the followers are corrupt. The problem of corruption is traceable to the debauchery of colonial rule.¹

Among the theories of Africa politics that has help to understand the predicament and more importantly the issue of endemic corruption, include theory of two publics developed by Peter Eke. Prebandalism popularized by Richard Joseph and GurnalMyrdals soft state thesis. Others have captured Africa as a rentier, patrimonial and neopatrimonial state. These theories are important not only to understand the predicament in Africa countries but also providing explanation for the pandemic corruption ravaging Africa countries.

Ekeh, argued that one most striking impacts of colonialism was the emergence of two public realm. The primordial and civil public realism which related differently with the private realm in terms of morality.² For Nigeria, Eke argued: only right i.e. benefits are expected from the state by its citizens who own duties or responsibilities to a native sector. The former forms the basis of an amoral civil public realm and the later a public was concerned with illegitimate and exploitative colonial rule and had no moral linkages with the private realms. It was an amoral public realm in which cheating the system was considered a patriotic duty.³

Let consider the word corruption and what do we mean by corruption?identified three dimensional approaches to the definition. These are

definitions based on legal criteria, public opinion and public interest. From the legal perspective, political corruption is connected to any behaviour that violates some formal standard or rule of behaviour set down by a political system for its public officials.⁴ For example Nye conceives political to mean an act which “deviates” from the formal duties of public role because of private regarding (personal, close family, clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rule against the exercise of certain types of private role regarding influence”.⁵ This definition includes behaviour such as bribery (use to prevent the judgment of a person into a position of trust)’ nepotism (bestowal of purpose reason of inscriptive relationship rather than merit and the misappropriation (illegal appropriation of public resources for private uses.

Brinkerhoff see “corruption as subsuming wide variety of illegal, illicit, irregular and/or unprincipled activities and behaviours”. From this perspective, corruption then is importantly a moral, political and legal issue.⁶

In this context, corruption is a multi-conceptual that has legal, social, political, economic and ethnical connotations. It comes in various forms, it simply conceived in this as misuse, or improper use of power and influence, deliberately and consciously for personal aggrandizement or group advantage. In this sense, corruption connotes the abuse of public role or resources or the use of illegitimate forms of political power and influence by public or private practice. Conceived in

this manner, corruption is inextricably tied (but not limitedly) to politics, more especially i.e. politics defined from Harold Lasswell tradition of “who get what when and how” and perhaps how much. The struggle over resources otherwise known as” National cake: in the Nigeria society has taken a debilitating approach permitting all forms of corruptions. The idea that the “national cake” is meant to be shared rather than baked, by the various ethnic group that constitute Nigeria Federation provides a fertile group for the kleptomaniac elites to siphon the public fund.⁷

Corruption has been a major cause of injustice in society, where greedy and selfish people pervert the norms of society, that guider its well-being. Recent world attention on corruption is due to evidence abounding that corruption damaged the fabric of society in many ways. It makes governments and communities uneconomic, unstable and unsafe. Most crisis in Africa is caused as a result of corruption, Nigeria in Particular is embedded by corruption. Bribery which is the most popular form of corruption has rendered government uneconomic and ungovernable. Bribery encourages unfair advantages and renders competition, a feature of democratic struggle invalid. Byreceiving bribes. People in authority abuse trust. In some countries in Africa, bribery is so rampant that it has gain social acceptance as a way of doing business. In other countries like Nigeria bribery has become endemic and a (necessary) way of life, for public officials as a way of earning additional incomes. This has led to extortion of

bribes from the public and people need to pay these extortion bribes to pursue business or personal well-being.

By far the most destructive form of corruption in Africa is perpetrated by the rich who seek excessive riches and adopt extravagant lifestyle to the extent that it significantly affects the well-being of society. It is this type of corruption that African leaders have been identified with and which has worsened their human crisis situation;. By making the leaders self-centred, greedy and insensitive to the needs of their people, who daily grapple with poverty, disease, violent, starvation, war and death.

Corruption breeds poverty, sickness low life and unequal distribution of income and wealth. This face produced by corruption wish was formerly the face of the third world and much more the portrait of Africa can now be seen all over the world. Corruption is therefore a global phenomenon, yet the poor are mostly victims as their poverty is created by the greed of others. Corruption and poverty go hand-in-hand.

Abacha and Corruption

General Sani Abacha's administration remains the most notorious in terms of corruption manifestations and autocracy. Abacha, through the Chagouri and Chagouri (an international consortium owned by five Lebanese brothers)

embezzled Nigeria's funds and deposited in banks across the world. His loot is valued at over \$20 billion dollars.⁸

When General Sanni Abacha assumed office on 17 November, 1993, after overthrowing the Interim National Government (ING) under Chief Ernest Shonekan that was put in place by General Babangida, he declared that his administration inherited an economy which was characterized by grave debilities and instability. To put the economy on a better footing he produced a budget of N110.2 billion and introduced a tight monetary policy. In addition, to demonstrate his readiness to achieve economic management in 1994, especially as it concerns corruption, he promulgated the failed bank (Recovery of Debts) and financial malpractices Decree, as well as the money laundering Decree of 17 December, 1994. As novel as these were, Abacha turned them into tools for settling personal scores and a lot of people such as Alhaji Ibrahim Dasuki and the Sultan of Sokoto were jailed.⁹

Abacha's administration was notorious for tampering with and looting the public treasury. He and members of his family became some of the richest people in the world. He served himself and allowed his lieutenants to serve themselves as well. For instance, after his death, Chief Anthony Emeka Ani, his finance Minister refunded the sum of \$45 million allegedly given to him by his master, Abacha for managing the crumbled economy well. This "Ani Gift" was said to be

his share of the \$1.5 billion over-charged by Abacha administration for debt buy-back which entailed the paying of some \$500 million for a \$2.5 billion Russian debt on the white elephant Ajaokuta steel project, which itself swallowed some \$7 billion. Ani's steel counterpart. Power and steel Minister Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu, got DM5 million from Abacha's son, Muhammed who brokered the deal.¹⁰

Under the Abacha administration several public utilities collapsed. The four refineries stopped production of petroleum products, thereby creating a severe domestic shortage which led to Nigerian importing fuel on a massive scale. By the last quarter of 1994, when Abacha's insincerity to national interest began to have a serious negative impact on the economy foreign investors started divesting capital out of the country. By the time his regime came to an end occasioned by his sudden death, capital flight, associated with uncertainties surrounding his self-succession bid, had caused the naira to devalue to the extent that exchange rate went up to N93/\$1 from N85/\$1.¹⁹ Abacha's attempt to re-direct the economy was a colossal failure.

General Abacha suffered humiliating criticisms in the hands of the pro-democracy activist after he abandoned his promise to revisit the annulled June 12, 1993 elections. He quickly reassert his authority by striking at those whom he had a grievance and his perceived enemies – either real or imagined. Top on the list of his victims were, Bashorun M.K.O Abiola himself. He was arrested and detained

on June 23, 1994 for declaring himself President a year after the annulment of the June 12 1993 elections. He was charged for treason in the Abuja High Court. Chief Abiola's attempt to regain freedom from detention through judicial process was frustrated. The last time he came to court was in 1994. He never appeared in court again until he was suspected to be poisoned in detention and died of cardiac arrest in 1998.¹¹

Abacha's dictatorship laid the country waist in moral. Citizens were disillusioned, disenfranchised and pauperized. Political antagonism among groups and nationalities was heightened. A huge percentage of the national income had been spent on security for the dictator's image making. During the regime industry and agriculture recorded very low growth. Incomes were static. Prices rose beyond the reach of the ordinary citizen. Education standard was seriously affected. Many could not afford the cost of schooling. There was acute fuel scarcity. The economy was at the mercy of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Nigeria became a pariah state in the comity of nations.

The administration of General Sani Abacha who pushed Shonekan out and came into power made efforts, to curb corruption. The most popular programme credited to the General is the War against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC). He had also reconstituted the National Orientation Agency (NOA) and many probe panels were set up to investigate several government agencies and

parastatals, for example, Customs, NITEL and Nigerian Airways. The activities of the Failed Bank Tribunal were also credited to the Abacha's Administration. Nevertheless, the administration's crusade against corruption was not seen as credible because some members of the cabinet had been indicted by some probe panels in the past. Again, top government functionaries did not declare their assets as required by the Code of Conduct Bureau (CCB). All of these lapses tend to cast doubt on the integrity of the government and its bid to control corruption.

In the case of Nigeria, one can safely say that the most illegitimate and reckless regime since independence in 1960 to date was that of General Sani Abacha. The regime not only sacked the interim National Government put in place following the infamous "stepping aside" of Babangida, it continued as did his predecessor in the systematic looting of the nation's treasury. Despite the fact that he promised to fight corruption and actually started on a positive note by constituting the Failed Bank Tribunal and inaugurating the War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC), it soon became obvious that Abacha himself epitomized corruption.

After his death in office on 8 June 1998, revelations upon revelations about how the Army General looted the nation were made public. Thereafter, the Federal Government went on the offensive and recovered the following from the family of the late Army General¹²:

In the federal capital territory alone, the Abacha family was asked to forfeit six ultra-modern buildings worth millions of naira.

- The family was asked to return the sum of \$625,263,187.19 to the state.
- Over 75million British pounds and another 100million naira returned to the state.
- 250million naira recovered from Mohammed Abacha-the son of the late General.
- 96.9million naira was also forfeited by another son of the General- Abdulkadir Abacha.

Since Abacha was aware from the onset that his government was unacceptable to the people of Nigeria who were by then tired of military dictatorship, with its lies and deceit; he therefore promoted corrupt practices with a view to holding on to power even at the prospect of a civil war. Pay offs and rewards to loyalists of the regime became the norm rather the exception. A few of those who benefitted from his largesse are:

- Chief Anthony Ani who got a gift of DM30 million and US \$3 million
- Alhaji Bashir Dalhatu who got US \$5 million which was held in a London Account.
- Alhaji Abdulazeez Arisekola Alao who also got 100 million naira for his loyalty.¹³

Little wonder that the people took to the street in jubilation on learning of the death of General Abacha on 8 June 1998.

Transparency International and the Abacha Regime

TI ranked Nigeria as the most perceived corrupt country in its 1996 Corruption Perception Index (CPI). At the time Sani Abacha was serving as the country's military head of state. According to Oby Ezekwesili, Co-founder of Transparency International (TI Nigeria Chapter), says she was branded "conspiracy international" by the military government under Abacha for her stance against corruption.¹⁴The CPI of 1996 had Nigeria as the most perceived corrupt country, because corruption is a symptom of poor governance which was d order of the day.

The blanket criticism by TI, which has little bearing on the facts, is therefore unfortunate. The singling out of Nigeria for criticism by TI for adopting measures, which are globally used in cases of this nature and which have produced good results for the country is unfair. The federal Ministry of Justice therefore wishes to assure the Nigerian public that it will at all times be guided by national Interest, the need to promote transparency and accountability and international best practices in the Ministry's dealings with the Abacha family and indeed, all such recovery proceedings.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Manifestation of corruption has remained the most notorious social menace threatening the general growth and development of Nigeria. Exhibition of corrupt tendencies by public officials have bastardized the pace of growth and development in all facets. Nigeria has lost an estimated fifty percent (50%) of what it has generated since independence to public office looters. The most frustrating reality is that these looted funds are not invested in Nigeria but are dumped in foreign accounts to the betterment of the economies of those states. Manifestation of corruption has broadened the gap between the rich and the poor. While the rich keeps living in affluence, the poor suffocate in abject poverty and illiteracy. The ‘praetorian guard’ who intervened in Nigerian politics had destroyed all forms of transparency and accountability and as a matter of fact, institutionalized corruption manifestations.

In nearly five secretive years in power, Nigeria's Gen. Sani Abacha built a reputation for authoritarian, sometimes brutal rule. He was less known -- but in terms of his legacy to Nigeria, perhaps more important -- for overseeing a web of corruption that Nigerians and oil industry sources say plundered billions of dollars from the country.

Abacha died today at age 54. While he ruled Nigeria from a fortified presidential villa in Nigeria's capital, the sources said, he and a circle of aides and business partners tapped virtually every stage of the oil business, Nigeria's most important industry and the source of 80 percent of its government revenue. They took kickbacks from foreign companies for licenses to search for oil in the basin and delta of the Niger River and offshore. They got bribes from construction firms that won contracts to build drilling rigs and pipelines. And, in a business that generated a daily river of cash, Abacha and several associates supervised every sale of Nigerian crude by the state-owned oil company, the sources said, sluicing off an unknown percentage of the \$10 billion a year that Nigeria earns on average in oil sales.

In recent years, Abacha, his allies and top officials have added a new form of corruption that is killing the Nigerian economy -- the siphoning of money used by Nigeria's oil refineries to turn crude into gasoline. Finance and Oil Ministry officials argue openly in the Nigerian press over who is responsible for diverting more than \$2 billion from the four state-owned refineries in recent years, but the refineries' ruin creates an artificial fuel shortage for this nation of more than 100 million people.

Nigeria is thus forced to import refined fuels, such as gasoline, and, traders say, Abacha and his cronies controlled that trade too, skimming off a

percentage. The government subsidizes the sale price of gasoline and other fuels, but Abacha loyalists among the officer corps and civil service divert much of the available supply to sell on the black market or to neighboring countries. The fuel shortage has forced the economy into near depression, leaving millions of people poorer and sicker.

In Nigeria, corruption isn't part of government, it's the object of government, said a Nigerian political scientist who asked not to be named. For 28 of the 38 years since Nigeria gained independence from Britain, the country has been ruled by the military, and Nigerians say corruption has grown steadily. For the past two years, Transparency International, a Berlin-based organization that monitors corruption, has conducted surveys of businessmen that have ranked Nigeria as the world's most corrupt place to do business.

Since the growth of Nigeria's oil industry in the 1970s, military rulers have controlled the trade. But whereas earlier rulers doled out the graft to key supporters, Abacha has increasingly monopolized the trade himself and there is no deal that does not go through the presidential villa."

Under Abacha, corruption took Nigeria further into economic collapse than ever before. Besides the collapse of the fuel distribution system, the telephone network is decaying. The electrical grid is failing. Almost no part of Lagos -- the steaming, teeming financial and commercial capital -- gets electricity

all day, and vast tracts of the city of 8 million never get power at all. Business is mired by a thousand such failures, and analysts estimate the unemployment rate to be at least 25 percent. Millions of Nigerians survive on ingenuity and doggedness as street vendors, curb side fix-it men, prostitutes, subsistence farmers.

The aforementioned culminated in ‘lip actions’ and vendetta ranging from the military hypocritical initiatives such as the War against Indiscipline (WAI) to civilian witch-hunt through the apparatus of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and other related agencies. The irony remains that these institutions and agencies as well as policy programmes were never designed to prevent, tame, deter or kill the traits of corruption but to fight its manifestations. Even the so called ‘anti-corruption’ agencies were formed on corrupt foundation with vague legislations and structures devoid of transparency and accountability.

It is pertinent to note and understand that corruption is an aspect of that inherent and congenital greed and selfishness of man aimed at self-preservation and glory. It can neither be killed nor fought but can be successfully suppressed, tamed, controlled and deterred. Manifestations of corruption can therefore be reduced to its barest minimum if modalities are put in place to prevent and deter the manifestations of corruption rather than fight it. We therefore categorize our recommendations into two: prevention and deterrence.

Prevention as “the act or practice of stopping something bad from happening”. It is an act of forestalling and taking pre-emptive measures to avert

any perceived harmful occurrence. I proposed three ways of preventing corruption, thus: improving public sector service delivery by focusing on public sector accountability and legal reform in order to reintroduce rule of law; building integrity by promoting governmental accountability and transparency; and building an anti-corruption capacity of the public sector – including parliament, watchdog and enforcement agencies, and the judiciary and of civil society, particularly by strengthening non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media. Though deterrence is wrongly applied to be synonymous with prevention, it represents a more radical and drastic measure aimed at discouraging rather than preventing targeted human actions. Deterrence aims at restraining, dissuading and inhibiting a rational being from executing intended actions for fear of counteractions. Since corruption is natural and congenital, it would rather be more productive to deter its manifestations through some draconian legislation. As earlier mentioned, what really encourages the manifestations of corruption is that “it rewards outweighs its punishment”. For instance, there has always been anti-corruption legislations in Nigeria yet, the trait keeps manifesting in more notorious forms. This is more so because such legislations are not good enough to deter people from exhibiting such trait. Therefore, for Nigeria under the remaining years of President Buhari to make gains in its anti-corruption fight, “punishments against manifestations of corruption must outweigh its rewards”. There will be nothing wrong for Nigeria to invoke capital punishment for looters

of public treasury; after all, looters have indirectly sent thousands of Nigerians to their untimely sepulcher.

Abacha avoided broad publicity involving state corruption partly by keeping a low profile abroad. His face was ubiquitous on Nigerian television and in government publications but little known internationally.

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