

PRESIDENTIAL COUNCIL SCANDAL



What began as the Presidency's attempt to dismiss the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC) as a fictitious organization has snowballed into a far wider controversy over the integrity of Nigeria's public institutions. It has also stirred several questions over how an agency declared non-existent could allegedly operate within government circles and appear in the 2026 Appropriation Act with a N1.3 billion allocations. As a follow up to this, opposition leaders, lawyers, civil society groups and former senior government officials intensified calls for an independent investigation, warning that the affair has become a test of the Tinubu administration's commitment to transparency and accountability. While the Presidency has firmly dismissed Adeniyi Adeyemi as an impostor and absolved Chief of Staff Femi Gbajabiamila of bribery allegations, the central question has shifted. It is no longer simply whether Adeyemi forged documents; it is whether Nigeria's governance systems contain weaknesses significant enough to allow a fictitious institution to pass through multiple layers of official scrutiny. Chronologically, the Presidency's account suggests that concerns first emerged in October 2025 after the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) complained that PFIPC's activities conflicted with its statutory mandate. According to the Presidency, Gbajabiamila immediately petitioned the police and the Department of State Services (DSS), describing the organization as fraudulent. Adeyemi was subsequently arrested, and investigators allegedly recovered forged documents. Police concluded that both the council and his appointment were fictitious. Ordinarily, such an explanation might

have settled the matter. Instead, fresh questions emerged because the same Council later appeared in the 2026 Appropriation Act with an allocation exceeding N1.3 billion for personnel, overheads and capital expenditure. This transformed the controversy from an alleged criminal case into a governance puzzle.

The most important issue is not the bribery allegation itself. Rather, it is the budgetary trail. Nigeria's budget is not produced by a single individual. Before any agency receives an allocation, proposals typically originate from the relevant institution, undergo scrutiny by the Budget Office, receive executive approval through the Federal Executive Council, pass detailed committee examination in both chambers of the National Assembly and are ultimately signed into law by the President. The implications are that if the Presidency maintains that PFIPC never legally existed, then one of Nigeria's most fundamental public finance processes appears to have failed, as stakeholders pointed to implications far beyond this particular controversy.

Equally overlooked is the question of institutional validation, as Adeyemi was not merely issuing press statements. Public records indicate engagements with the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, meetings with the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), consultations with the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), and preparations for a World Investment Summit. According to his claims, the council also maintained office space within the Federal Secretariat, operated bank accounts through the CBN and secured recognition from the Office of the Head of the Civil Service. One institution that may bear significant responsibility, and perhaps the greatest share of the blame, for the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC) scandal is the current bicameral National Assembly under the leadership of Senate President Godswill Akpabio. Right from the outset, and perhaps owing to the manner of his emergence as the first among equals in the federal parliament, Akpabio left little doubt that, under his watch, the line of oversight between the Executive and the Legislature could fade into near insignificance.

The Akpabio-led National Assembly appeared to align itself closely with the Bola Ahmed Tinubu administration when, during the President's first appearance to present the 2024 Appropriation Bill, lawmakers replaced the national anthem with President Tinubu's campaign song, 'On Your Mandate, We Shall Stand.' Having elected to stand on the President's mandate, the 10th National Assembly appeared to have effectively abdicated its constitutional role as a check on the Executive. Beyond making laws, the Legislature is charged with ensuring that the Executive operates within the rule of law and remains transparent and accountable in its conduct.

At a press conference on June 25, 2026, Prince Adeyemi accused the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, of receiving N400 million through a proxy and later demanding an additional N200 million to facilitate his appointment as Director of the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council. Adeyemi also alleged that he rejected a request by the Chief of Staff for 48 per cent of the PFIPC's proposed N27.4 billion take-off grant. Pushing back against the Chief of Staff's denial of the Council's existence, Adeyemi expressed dismay that Gbajabiamila could issue "a disclaimer distancing the Office of the Chief of Staff to the

President from the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC), alongside the Presidential Economic Advisory Council (PEAC)." He said: "My name has been drawn into this storm. I reject outright any attempt to reduce this matter to simple denials without addressing the core questions that Nigerians are now asking. "The issue is no longer about personalities. It is about contradictions that demand answers. "This claim by the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, that he doesn't know about the existence of the agency is derisory because, in the real world, he should cover his face in shame. "If Femi Gbajabiamila, who is supposed to be the Chief of Staff to the President and also the administrative gateway to the Presidency, can make such an administrative error by allowing the President to sign a document containing a fake agency, he should possibly resign his appointment now." The National Assembly also came under scrutiny when the chief executive of the disputed council asked: "How did the agency's name get into the 2026 Appropriation Bill on pages 50 and 51? If the agency does not exist yet has found its way into the Nigerian national budget, it means the entire 2026 appropriation budget is fraudulent and should be discarded. "What the Chief of Staff to the President is now saying by his denial, published in various national dailies, is that our 109 distinguished senators, among whom are seasoned administrators, former governors and diverse professional experts, were incompetent to detect the fake agency in the national budget. "What it means is that our 360 members of the House of Representatives are merely rubber stamps, as has been speculated. This is not an emotional question.

It is a procedural one because the national budget does not emerge in isolation. It passes through multiple layers of technical drafting, executive coordination, ministerial inputs, Budget Office review, and finally legislative scrutiny by both chambers of the National Assembly..." Former Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF), David Babachir Lawal, has questioned claims that a government agency could exist within the federal bureaucracy without the executive's knowledge. Lawal said it would be unusual for any organization to operate as a government agency without passing through established administrative processes. "I don't know how it can happen whether an agency of government can exist without executive input, if you're asking me, because all such agencies report to the Office of the Secretary to the Government. Appointment letters are signed by the Secretary to the Government. Office allocation for MDAs is done by the Office of the Secretary to the Government. "So, I don't know this government; their own style is different. But while I was there, all appointment letters were signed by the SGF after approval by the President. The President approves and directs you to issue the letters. They come to the agencies, come to you, request office allocation, and then you allocate the office, and so on and so forth." On whether the National Assembly could approve budgetary provisions without establishing whether such agencies existed, the former SGF explained that budgets are first compiled by ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), presented by the Budget Office at the Federal Executive Council (FEC), and later defended by the MDAs. "Usually, all budgets are aggregated under the supervising minister, and then he comes to defend them. Many times, even before it gets there, all MDAs defend their budgets before the Minister of Budget and Planning. "So, there are

processes. I don't know how it can be done without the SGF knowing or without the Federal Executive Council knowing. The budget is forwarded to the National Assembly by the President after the Federal Executive Council has approved it, and after every MDA has defended it before the Budget Office. "When a line appears in the budget that has no owner, you begin to wonder. But this is a different government, and their whole style is different. So, I don't know how they do it." Lawal added that while the President has the power to award contracts without the input of the National Assembly, such contracts must be backed by appropriated funds. "This government, their style of doing things is different. The President is the Executive President, so I don't know what he can do. The National Assembly doesn't get involved in contract awards. What happens is that if the President awards a contract for which funds are not appropriated, it is an impeachable offence in the government in which I served. But now I don't know," he said.

Presidential candidate of the African Democratic Congress, Atiku Abubakar, has said the presidency's response to allegations against the chief of staff to the president, Femi Gbajabiamila, over the scandalous activities of the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council, and its Director General, Adeniyi Adeyemi, is self-indicting. Atiku declared that the presidency's desperate attempt to explain away the scandal surrounding the so-called PFIPC has inadvertently exposed a far more disturbing reality under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's administration. He said the response by presidential spokesperson, Bayo Onanuga, was not a defence of the government but a public confession of institutional collapse. According to him, the allegations are too grave to ignore and demand an urgent probe into all parties involved, including the Central Bank of Nigeria and the National Assembly. "There is an African proverb that says that 'the man who points at the moon should not have blood on his finger.' A government cannot claim to be exposing fraud while simultaneously struggling to explain how that same fraud found its way into the very heart of the Nigerian state. "What the presidency intended as damage control has become self-indictment. Rather than extinguish the fire, it has illuminated how deeply the flames have consumed the foundations of governance.

"The Presidency now wants Nigerians to believe that one private citizen single-handedly forged presidential documents; impersonated senior government officials; established an office inside the Federal Secretariat; allegedly opened dozens of bank accounts—including accounts bearing government identities; hosted foreign ambassadors without diplomatic clearance; secured official recognition across several government circles; and all but embedded a phantom agency into the machinery of government without a single insider aiding him. That explanation demands far greater faith than the scandal itself.

"There is another timeless African proverb: 'When termites consume a tree from within, it still appears healthy until the first storm.' The fictitious agency scandal is that storm. What Nigerians have witnessed is not merely the exposure of an alleged impostor; it is the exposure of institutions hollowed out by years of negligence, incompetence, and impunity. "Even more troubling is the glaring contradiction that the presidency has failed to explain. "On one hand, it insists that the PFIPC never existed and was nothing more than an elaborate scam. On the other hand, public records reportedly reveal that approximately N1.3 billion was appropriated for that very council in the 2026 Appropriation Act, listed alongside the Presidential Economic Advisory Council. "This contradiction is too monumental to ignore. "If the agency was fictitious, who prepared the budget estimates bearing its name? Which ministry submitted them? Which officials defended those estimates before the National Assembly? Which committees scrutinized them? Which lawmakers

The most important issue is not the bribery allegation itself. Rather, it is the budgetary trail. Nigeria's budget is not produced by a single individual. Before any agency receives an allocation, proposals typically originate from the relevant institution, undergo scrutiny by the Budget Office, receive executive approval through the Federal Executive Council, pass detailed committee examination in both chambers of the National Assembly and are ultimately signed into law by the President. The implications are that if the Presidency maintains that PFIPC never legally existed, then one of Nigeria's most fundamental public finance processes appears to have failed, as stakeholders pointed to implications far beyond this particular controversy.

approved them? Who inserted the allocation into the appropriation bill? And ultimately, who signed that budget into law?" He added: "We therefore demand a truly independent investigation that follows the evidence wherever it leads. No sacred cows. No political protection. No selective justice."

The Yoruba socio-cultural organization, Afenifere, aligned with the late Chief Ayo Adebajo's faction, has declared that it had little confidence in the Federal Government's willingness to investigate allegations against the President's Chief of Staff, Femi Gbajabiamila, arguing that the administration "cannot investigate itself." The group, alongside anti-corruption campaigners and civic organizations, called for an independent, transparent and evidence-driven investigation into the allegations, warning that any attempt to ignore or suppress the matter could erode public confidence in the government's anti-corruption credentials. Speaking with a National Newspaper, The Guardian in his personal capacity, Afenifere's National Publicity Secretary, Prince Justice Faloye, said the allegations against Gbajabiamila did not come as a surprise, alleging that they were consistent with what he described as a pattern of misconduct. Faloye alleged that the Chief of Staff had become "the face of corruption" in President Bola Tinubu's administration, insisting that Nigerians should not expect the Federal Government to conduct a credible investigation. "I doubt the Chief of Staff would have the audacity to engage in such actions without enjoying the backing of powerful interests within the system," he alleged. According to him, any meaningful investigation is unlikely to come from within the government unless sustained pressure is mounted by civil society organizations, the media and other accountability institutions. He argued that only persistent public scrutiny and advocacy could compel the authorities to institute a credible and transparent probe into the allegations.

Also reacting, Chairman of the Centre for Anti-Corruption and Open Leadership (CACOL), Debo Adeniran, stressed the need for the government to investigate the allegations thoroughly in the interest of transparency, accountability and the rule of law. He warned that shielding the Chief of Staff from investigation could prove counterproductive, even as he cautioned against treating allegations as proof of guilt. Adeniran maintained that while the allegations deserve serious attention, due process must be allowed to take its course. "There have been several allegations surrounding the development. However, allegations alone are not enough. If anyone believes an individual was involved, such claims must be backed by credible evidence. "The responsibility of law enforcement agencies is to conduct a thorough, impartial and transparent investigation. The key question is: what evidence is available? Are there documents, physical evidence or credible witnesses that can substantiate the allegations?" he asked. He emphasized that every accused person remains innocent until proven guilty, irrespective of the office occupied. "If investigations are ongoing, the authorities should gather all available evidence, including eyewitness testimony where necessary, and allow the facts to determine the outcome. "Where there is sufficient evidence, the law should take its course. Where there is none, no individual should be subjected to trial by public opinion. "Some people have alleged that the government is attempting to suppress or influence the process. Such claims should also be subjected to scrutiny. The investigation should remain open, transparent and evidence-based so that the truth can emerge and justice can be served," he added. Similarly, the Yoruba Ronu Leadership Forum urged President Tinubu's administration not to sweep the allegations under the carpet, while calling for a broader review of alleged irregularities in the budgeting process. In a statement, the forum's President, Akin Malaolu, said the allegations of

bribery for appointments and demands for kickbacks raised serious questions that should be independently investigated. While noting that Gbajabiamila had denied the allegations and described them as false and politically motivated, the forum maintained that the matter should not end with denials. It called on the Federal Government to investigate the claims in the national interest and prosecute anyone found culpable after due process. The forum also urged the President to ensure that allegations of budget padding and fraudulent insertions into federal budgets were thoroughly examined, warning that any manipulation of the nation's budget amounts to a betrayal of public trust and should not be tolerated.

Reacting, the Convener, Security Situation Room, Mr Douglas Ogbankwa, said the entire episode is a shame to the country. According to him, it is unheard of that an agency that is operating from the Federal Secretariat is fake. "I have been to the Federal Secretariat, once or twice in my life. If you cannot identify yourself very well, they will not give you access to the structure. "So, apart from identifying yourself, you must say exactly where you are going to, and who you want to see before they can give you access to the Federal Secretariat. It's within the Three Arms zone, which is like the green zone of the Federal Government. "Now, imagine somebody taking a space in the Federal Secretariat, putting the portrait of the President, his own portrait, the coat of arms and the national flag," he questioned. Ogbankwa argued that it is not easy to host ambassadors without getting a recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, adding that for Prince Adeniyi Adeyemi to be engaged in those showed that he had the contacts. He also wondered how the agency got into the national budget and also got Gazetted by the federal government. "So, they should stop the crap. As far as I'm concerned, Femi Gbajabiamila should step aside. "There are some things, when you begin to talk to some of us, you make us feel as if we are fools. We are not fools. The truth of the matter is that he has been caught red-handed," he said, urging those involved to stop weaving wrong narratives to divert attention. He explained that charging Adeyemi to court is not a challenge, but those involved in the scandal should be identified, investigated and also punished. According to him, they are making frantic efforts to bury the incident under the carpet, warning that a judicial panel of enquiry should be inaugurated to unravel the truth about the incident. He said: "If an agency can set up 34 bank accounts, set up nine accounts with the Central Bank of Nigeria, and can have the Central Bank of Nigeria credited with over N1 billion, it should not be a fake agency. "They should step aside. It's a shame. No country in the world would take us seriously with this kind of thing going on. "This is a state, it's not a child's play. The role of a state is not a joke, even if you don't know what you are doing." The lawyer argued that if this is true, it means that there are other fake agencies existing within the government unknown to the public, insisting that those involved should cover their faces in shame. The Kano-based lawyer, Abubakar Sani believes the scandal is an insider-job. According to him, the heads of the relevant agencies (at all levels) were all in on it. "They were compromised. Quid pro quo. All contrary to their oaths of office under the Constitution (the 7th Schedule). "Otherwise it would have been completely impossible to execute with such brazenness and impunity," he declared. The senior lawyer stated that the relevant law enforcement and regulatory agencies (ICPC, EFCC and the Code of Conduct Bureau) have questions to answer for sleeping on their beat.

He asked: "Will they dare step on the very big toes clearly involved? Will they name names? Who are the culprits within the system? Can anyone dare blow the whistle on them? "There are obviously more questions than answers in the scandal. Nigerians are watching and waiting. Perhaps it will take another public interest suit by SERAP (or may be an application under FOI) before a semblance of action is taken."

Similarly, a Lagos based lawyer, Mr Stephen Azubuike lamented that the unprecedented level of corruption within the ranks in various government agencies makes ugly stories like this believable. A thorough check of this fraudulent scheme, he stated, will certainly reveal the role of accomplices within the system who carefully ensured the success of the well-orchestrated criminal venture. He said: "With all we have seen in this country—from cash loads taking lease of apartments—to wild animals swallowing funds—the story of Adeyemi Adeniyi is one of those stories we only wish were fairy tales."

Former Minister of Youth and Sports, Solomon Dalung, criticized the Presidency's defence of the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, over the alleged activities of Prince Adeniyi Adeyemi, saying the official response leaves several critical questions unanswered. Dalung was reacting to a statement by Presidential spokesman Bayo Onanuga, which sought to clear Gbajabiamila of any involvement in the matter. According to Dalung, while the Presidency attempted to exonerate the Chief of Staff, its explanation highlighted what he described as significant gaps in government oversight. He argued that regardless of the outcome of the ongoing court proceedings involving Adeyemi, the Presidency still owes Nigerians an explanation of how a purportedly fictitious presidential agency allegedly operated within government circles without being detected. Dalung questioned how an individual could allegedly establish a fake government agency, forge an appointment letter, operate from the Federal Secretariat, recruit personnel, engage with government institutions, meet diplomats and reportedly obtain a Central Bank of Nigeria account without attracting official scrutiny. He also expressed concern over reports that the alleged agency appeared in the national budget, noting that budget proposals undergo several stages of executive and legislative review before approval. "If the council was fake, explain how it entered the budget," Dalung said. He added that the Presidency did not explain who introduced the budget provision, processed it or approved it during the budget process. Dalung further questioned how office space was allegedly secured at the Federal Secretariat, asking which authority approved the allocation and why the operation was not discovered earlier. He also referred to the Presidency's mention of Dolapo Babatunde Tanimola, whom investigators reportedly identified as the person Prince Adeniyi Adeyemi claimed helped procure the alleged forged appointment letter before reportedly dying in a hotel fire day before Adeyemi's arrest. Dalung questioned whether investigators thoroughly examined the circumstances surrounding Tanimola's death, including whether an autopsy, coroner's inquest or forensic analysis of his communications and financial records was conducted. While acknowledging that the allegations against Adeyemi are currently before the court, Dalung maintained that accountability should not end with prosecuting one

individual. He said the government should also explain how its institutions allegedly interacted with, or failed to detect, what the Presidency now describes as a fictitious agency. Dalung called on the Presidency to make public documentary evidence, timelines and official records addressing the alleged inclusion of the agency in the national budget, its reported operations within the Federal Secretariat and the apparent failure of institutional safeguards.

The Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) has called for an independent investigation into the alleged activities of Adeniyi Adeyemi, saying the controversy exposes serious institutional failures that threaten public confidence in government. In a statement signed by Executive Director Auwal Musa Rafsanjani, the organization expressed concern over allegations that Adeyemi operated for years under the guise of leading the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council and the Presidential Economic Advisory Council, reportedly maintaining government offices, operating bank accounts, employing staff and interacting with several public institutions before being declared an impostor. CISLAC argued that if the allegations are confirmed, the scandal extends beyond one individual and points to widespread lapses in administrative controls, due diligence and institutional oversight. It urged the Presidency to support a transparent and independent probe into the role of all agencies and officials whose actions or omissions allegedly enabled the operation. The organization also called for a forensic audit of all accounts and transactions linked to the alleged councils, a review of procedures governing presidential committees and advisory bodies, and sanctions against any public officials found to have facilitated or failed to prevent the alleged misconduct. It said the investigation should be used to strengthen governance systems and prevent similar incidents in the future.

Meanwhile the Conference of Nigeria Political Parties Nigeria has called for the sack of top Government Officials who are behind this show of shame and the resignation of Mr President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. In a press release signed by the Deputy National Publicity Secretary Comrade James Ezema. It reads 'Nigeria Is Not a Banana Republic: CNPP Demands Sack of Top Government Officials, then Tinubu's Resignation, Condemns Mishandling of Multi-Billion Naira 'Fake Agency' Scandal. The Conference of Nigeria Political Parties (CNPP) has watched with deep shock, profound disappointment and growing national embarrassment the unfolding scandal surrounding the purported Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council, an agency now publicly described by the Presidency as "fake" or "fictitious" despite its inclusion in the 2026 Appropriation Act signed into law by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu. What should ordinarily have been a straightforward case of administrative correction has now snowballed into one of the greatest self-inflicted international embarrassments in Nigeria's democratic history due to the incompetence and poor crisis management displayed by the All Progressives Congress (APC)-led Federal Government. The CNPP states unequivocally that if Nigeria were a serious country with functioning institutions and a culture of accountability, heads of critical government agencies and top political appointees implicated by this scandal would have already resigned or been immediately relieved of their duties pending investigations. Nigerians have been told that, for months, one Prince Adeniyi Adeyemi Matthew allegedly operated a federal agency that did not exist; occupied office

space within the Federal Secretariat in Abuja; allegedly held meetings with ambassadors and foreign nationals; corresponded with government institutions; and allegedly opened bank accounts, including one with the Central Bank of Nigeria, all under the guise of being the Director-General of the so-called Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council. The matter became even more disturbing when documents emerged showing that this same supposedly "non-existent" agency was captured in the 2026 Appropriation Act with over N1.3 billion in budgetary allocations, including funds for salaries, allowances and even a proposed World Investment Summit. This is not merely a scandal; it is an indictment of the entire machinery of government. A federal budget does not write itself. Budgetary allocations do not mysteriously descend from heaven. Every line item in the national budget passes through rigorous bureaucratic and political processes. The budget is prepared by the executive, scrutinized by the Federal Executive Council chaired by the President, presented to the National Assembly by the President, debated and approved by lawmakers, and eventually signed into law by the President. Consequently, the Federal Government cannot, in one breath, sign an Appropriation Act containing an agency and, in another breath, issue a press statement declaring the same agency "fake," "illegal" or "non-existent." Such conduct portrays Nigeria as a nation that neither understands nor respects its own laws and constitutional processes. The CNPP insists that by virtue of its inclusion in the 2026 Appropriation Act and the presidential assent granted to that Act, the agency acquired legal recognition for the purpose of the budget year unless and until the relevant provisions of the law are amended or repealed by the National Assembly. No government can invalidate an Act of Parliament through a press statement.

No presidential aide has the constitutional authority to nullify a duly enacted law by mere public declaration. The Federal Government may choose to discontinue the operations of the agency or scrap it altogether, but it cannot lawfully declare an agency contained in a subsisting Act of Parliament as "fake." To do so is to ridicule the National Assembly, undermine the sanctity of the country's laws and project Nigeria before the international community as a Banana Republic where state institutions have collapsed. Even more embarrassing is the manner in which this scandal has been handled. A competent and responsible administration with effective crisis-management mechanisms would simply have announced the scrapping of the agency, initiated an immediate investigation and transmitted an Executive Bill to the National Assembly seeking an amendment to the 2026 Appropriation Act to reflect the government's decision. That would have demonstrated leadership, responsibility and respect for constitutional processes. Instead, the APC-led Federal Government chose a path that has embarrassed Nigeria internationally, amplified doubts about the country's institutional credibility and further strengthened the already negative global perception of Nigeria as a corruption-prone nation. Foreign investors and international partners are now asking uncomfortable questions. If a supposedly non-existent agency can find its way into a signed federal budget, what other questionable entities are hidden in government finances? If an allegedly fictitious agency could secure office space inside the Federal Secretariat and interface with key government institutions, what does that say about Nigeria's governance systems? If an allegedly fake agency could pass through the Budget Office, the Federal Executive Council, the National Assembly and receive presidential assent, where exactly are the safeguards that

government repeatedly boasts about? These are not opposition questions; they are governance questions. The real scandal is no longer about one individual standing trial. The real scandal is the failure of institutions. The real scandal is the incompetence of those entrusted with the administration of the country. The real scandal is the network of officials whose actions and inactions allegedly legitimized a purportedly non-existent agency. Accordingly, the Conference of Nigeria Political Parties hereby demands the immediate sack or resignation of all public officers whose actions and inactions enabled this monumental national embarrassment. The CNPP states further that should President Bola Ahmed Tinubu fail to immediately relieve these officials of their positions and commence a transparent process of accountability, then he must take full responsibility for this unprecedented governance failure and tender his resignation. As Chairman of the Federal Executive Council that scrutinized the budget proposal and as the President who personally signed the 2026 Appropriation Act into law, President Tinubu cannot escape responsibility for this monumental national embarrassment. In every functional democracy, leadership comes with responsibility and accountability. The buck stops on the President's table.

'Nigeria cannot continue to be governed in a manner that exposes the country to ridicule before the international community and reinforces the damaging global perception that corruption has become institutionalized within the country's public sector. A country that punishes only the alleged front man while shielding the powerful enablers behind the scenes is not fighting corruption; it is merely managing corruption. This scandal has become a defining moment for the APC administration. The Nigerian people deserve answers. They deserve accountability. They deserve leaders who respect the laws of the land and protect the integrity of state institutions. Above all, they deserve a government that will not turn the country into a global symbol of institutional failure and administrative incompetence.'

New documents have emerged showing that the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, OSGF, approved the disowned Director-General of the non-existent Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council, PFIPC, Mr Adeniyi Adeyemi, to attend the Canada-Africa Fintech Summit, CAFS, in August 2025. This came as former Vice President, Atiku Abubakar, slammed President Bola Tinubu's administration for dragging Nigeria to a point where scandals were no longer viewed as isolated incidents but recurring features of governance. This is even as the Socio-Economic Rights and Accountability Project, SERAP, also urged the Senate President, Senator Godswill Akpabio, and speaker of the House of Representatives, Tajudeen Abbas, to disclose certified copies of all documents relating to the consideration and approval of the allocation of over N1.3 billion (N1,302,978,784) to the PFIPC in the 2026 Appropriation Act. The presidency had alleged that Mr Adeyemi concocted letters and claims, insisting that the council never existed. It also asked investigators from the Department of State Services, DSS, the Nigeria Police Force and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, to identify and prosecute those within government institutions who allegedly assisted Adeniyi in carrying out the scheme.

Meanwhile, the controversy surrounding the alleged PFIPC intensified as a document obtained by Vanguard showed that the Permanent Secretary, Political and Economic Affairs

Office, Office of Secretary to the Government of the Federation, SGF, Engr. Nadungu Gagare, had approved a trip for Mr Adeyemi to attend a Fintech summit in Canada. The latest development has further escalated the dispute involving the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, and Adeyemi. The new document showed that the embattled PFIPC DG was given the nod by the SGF's office to attend the Fintech summit in Canada from August 3-8, 2025.

The document, signed by Engr. Gagare, on behalf of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, OSGF, showed that the embattled PFIPC DG was directed by the OSGF to register and involve other stakeholders in the programme. The document read: "In accordance with Mr President's Economic Strategies on the Agenda. I invite you to participate in and join the Nigerian delegation to Canada from August 3rd to 8th, 2025. "The CAFS Summit highlights strategic roles in Digital Finance and Technology, among stakeholders worldwide.

presence will strengthen this delegation. "For more information and details, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Permanent Secretary of the Political and Economic Affairs Office at the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation, OSGF, and the CAFS Organizing Group. Accept the warm regards of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation."

Reacting on the issue the former President and the Presidential Candidate of the ADC Alhaji Atiku Abubakar said through his spokesman said "Nigeria has sadly arrived at that point. The issue is no longer one scandal or another. The issue is the pattern. And when scandals become a pattern of governance, the inevitable conclusion is this: you are no longer managing scandals; you have become the scandal itself. "Investigations were announced, recoveries publicized, and assurances given, yet Nigerians are still waiting for a comprehensive public account of what transpired, who was held responsible, and

"The Presidency now wants Nigerians to believe that one private citizen single-handedly forged presidential documents; impersonated senior government officials; established an office inside the Federal Secretariat; allegedly opened dozens of bank accounts—including accounts bearing government identities; hosted foreign ambassadors without diplomatic clearance; secured official recognition across several government circles; and all but embedded a phantom agency into the machinery of government without a single insider aiding him. That explanation demands far greater faith than the scandal itself. "There is another timeless African proverb: 'When termites consume a tree from within, it still appears healthy until the first storm.' The fictitious agency scandal is that storm. What Nigerians have witnessed is not merely the exposure of an alleged impostor; it is the exposure of institutions hollowed out by years of negligence, incompetence, and impunity. "Even more troubling is the glaring contradiction that the presidency has failed to explain. "On one hand, it insists that the PFIPC never existed and was nothing more than an elaborate scam. On the other hand, public records reportedly reveal that approximately N1.3 billion was appropriated for that very council in the 2026 Appropriation Act, listed alongside the Presidential Economic Advisory Council. "This contradiction is too monumental to ignore. "If the agency was fictitious, who prepared the budget estimates bearing its name? Which ministry submitted them? Which officials defended those estimates before the National Assembly? Which committees scrutinized them? Which lawmakers approved them? Who inserted the allocation into the appropriation bill? And ultimately, who signed that budget into law?" He added: "We therefore demand a truly independent investigation that follows the evidence wherever it leads. No sacred cows. No political protection. No selective justice."

"This initiative will significantly contribute to shaping our economic vision, advancing development priorities, strengthening economic ties, fostering bilateral trade relations, and attracting foreign direct investment, FDI, to benefit the Nigerian economy. "Given the above, you are urgently requested to register and involve other stakeholders in the programme. Your experience, technical support, and

what institutional safeguards were erected to prevent a recurrence. "From unresolved questions surrounding the Humanitarian Affairs scandal to allegations of crude oil theft and illegal tanker releases that faded without publicly released investigative reports, to concerns raised over alleged discrepancies in the 2024 budget. "From the absence of a comprehensive forensic explanation; to the billions reportedly expended on refinery rehabilitation while public refineries

remain largely dysfunctional, to procurement controversies involving major infrastructure projects. "From recurring concerns over opaque contract awards, missing procurement records and appointments of persons linked to unresolved allegations, Nigerians have watched a familiar and deeply troubling pattern unfold. The pattern itself has become the scandal."

Also reacting, People's Democratic Party, PDP, asked President Tinubu to order an independent forensic investigation into allegations surrounding the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council, PFIPC, insisting the Presidency "cannot escape accountability" over claims involving the Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila. The opposition party said the controversy left the Presidency facing two equally damaging possibilities. In a statement signed by the spokesperson of its Interim National Working Committee, Mr Ini Ememobong, the PDP said allegations made by Prince Adeniyi Matthew over the PFIPC, and the Presidency's response through presidential

spokesperson, Bayo Onanuga, had raised fresh questions about accountability and the integrity of government institutions. The PDP said Mr Matthew alleged that Gbajabiamila solicited and received financial inducements to facilitate his appointment into the PFIPC before making further financial demands during the course of his engagement. "The Presidency cannot escape accountability by choosing between corruption and incompetence. If its version is true, it has admitted to an unprecedented collapse of institutional safeguards. "If Prince Matthew's version is true, it has exposed corruption at the heart of government. Either way, Nigerians deserve answers. "Whichever version of events proves to be true, the implications are deeply troubling," Ememobong said. The party said the Presidency, rather than directly denying the allegations, described Prince Matthew as an impostor who allegedly secured office space, had government staff assigned to him, operated CBN-registered accounts and conducted official business with agencies including the EFCC and other security institutions despite having no lawful authority. It said the Presidency's explanation only raised more questions.

"How did an alleged impostor gain unrestricted access to the Presidency? Who authorized the allocation of office space? Who approved the deployment of staff and budgetary resources? "How were official accounts established? Who permitted him to transact with federal institutions and security agencies? These are questions that cannot simply be dismissed through a press statement. "From the reported appointment of deceased persons into public offices, to controversies surrounding the presidential pardon process, the alleged N800

billion Progressive Governors Forum scandal, and several other avoidable administrative lapses, this administration has repeatedly found itself explaining controversies that ought never to have arisen," the party stated. The PDP urged President Tinubu to order an independent forensic investigation into the PFIPC controversy, suspend officials connected to the matter, pending the outcome of the inquiry, review administrative processes within the Presidency and issue an unreserved apology to Nigerians. "The Nigerian people deserve more than explanations. They deserve transparency, accountability, and institutions that inspire confidence rather than suspicion. Until this administration demonstrates a genuine commitment to holding itself accountable, every unresolved scandal will further erode public trust and strengthen Nigerians' determination to demand a government that is competent, transparent, and worthy of their confidence in 2027," Ememobong stated.

Fresh details have emerged regarding the alleged fraud involving the disowned Director-General of the controversial Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council (PFIPC), Adeniyi Adeyemi, revealing how the disputed agency allegedly gained access to key institutions within

Nigeria's public service. Documents reviewed in connection with the case suggest that several government officials and agencies allegedly processed requests that enabled Adeyemi to obtain a Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) account, a budget code, office accommodation at the Federal Secretariat, deployment of civil servants, and other privileges typically reserved for legally

established government agencies. Although these documents were listed as exhibits in the Federal Government's case against Adeyemi, a police investigation report reportedly indicated that officials who approved, processed, or signed the documents were not questioned during the investigation. The revelations have raised concerns about the level of due diligence exercised by senior public officials in handling requests submitted on behalf of the disputed agency. According to Premium Times, the authenticity of the documents could not be independently verified. However, the newspaper noted that questioning the officials involved would be crucial in determining whether the documents were genuine or forged, as well as the circumstances surrounding their issuance. Former Director-General of the Bureau of Public Service Reforms, Joe Abah, said the controversy had exposed significant weaknesses in government procedures. "Anyhow you look at it, questions are begging for answers. And whatever the answers will be, they will not be good," Abah said. According to Premium Times, the following government institutions and officials have been linked to the PFIPC controversy. Documents reviewed by Premium Times indicate that the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the



Federation (OSGF), the Office of the Chief of Staff to the President, the Office of the National Security Adviser (ONSA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Nigeria Police Force became aware of the alleged fraud involving Adeyemi in November 2025. In October 2025, Chief of Staff to the President, Femi Gbajabiamila, reportedly wrote to the Inspector-General of Police and the Director-General of the State Security Service (SSS), requesting an investigation into Adeyemi over alleged forgery.

On October 27, 2025, Gbajabiamila also wrote to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, distancing both the Presidency and the Federal Government from Adeyemi and the PFIPC after the ministry sought clarification. Again, on November 5, 2025, the Chief of Staff formally informed the Secretary to the Government of the Federation that neither the agency nor Adeyemi had been created or appointed by the Presidency. However, despite these internal communications, no public disclaimer was issued until June 2026—more than six months later. The delay has prompted questions about why the government did not publicly warn Nigerians earlier, allowing Adeyemi to allegedly continue presenting himself as the head of a presidential agency. Adeyemi allegedly claimed that his appointment letter as Director-General of the PFIPC was issued by Femi Gbajabiamila. Police investigators have described the appointment letter as forged, while Gbajabiamila has denied issuing it. The Chief of Staff was also the first senior government official to formally disown Adeyemi and petition security agencies to investigate the alleged forgery.

According to documents obtained by Premium Times, Nnamdi Mbaeri, who was then the Permanent Secretary, General Services Office at the OSGF, signed a letter dated November 21, 2024, requesting office accommodation for the PFIPC from recovered federal government properties managed by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Mbaeri retired in July 2025 and was succeeded by Mohammed Danjuma. The report noted that investigators may need to determine whether Mbaeri indeed signed the document, whether adequate verification of the agency's legal status was carried out before processing the request, and the basis upon which the office accommodation was approved. According to the report, officials of the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation processed several requests that allegedly enabled the PFIPC to operate like a recognized government agency. One official, identified as Abdullahi, reportedly responded to correspondence confirming that domiciliary accounts had been created for the PFIPC at the Central Bank of Nigeria. The report raises questions about the verification process used before approving the accounts and whether the agency satisfied the legal requirements for opening official CBN accounts. As Director of Treasury Inspectorate, Mulikat Sanni signed a letter dated March 26, 2025, granting the PFIPC provisional self-accounting status for six months.

Part of the letter stated: "I am directed to refer to your letter... and to convey the approval of the Accountant-General of the Federation to grant you a six-month provisional self-accounting status." According to Premium Times, one of the requirements for granting self-accounting status is a physical verification exercise by the Treasury Inspectorate Department.

The report questioned who conducted the verification, what their findings were, and whether investigators obtained the relevant reports during the police investigation. Sanni was later transferred to the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment in May 2025. On August 28, 2025, Dauda Abdulhamid, Director of Administration at the OAGF, reportedly approved the posting of more than 300 treasury officers to various Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), including three officers assigned to the PFIPC. The approval letter stated that the postings were intended to improve service delivery across government institutions. The handling of the criminal case has also attracted scrutiny. According to documents cited by Premium Times, police investigations commenced on October 23, 2025, and were concluded by November 13, 2025. Although charges were reportedly filed on November 27, 2025, the first court hearing was scheduled for July 27, 2026—about eight months later. The report noted that while law enforcement agencies often fast-track criminal prosecutions, the pace of this particular case has raised questions about the reasons for the delay. The PFIPC also operated the website pfipc.gov.ng, a government domain reportedly approved through the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA). WHOIS records reviewed by Premium Times showed that the domain was created on September 30, 2024, by NITDA web administrators. The website has since gone offline following the controversy. The .gov.ng domain is reserved exclusively for verified Nigerian government institutions and is managed by the Nigeria Internet Registration Association (NiRA) under NITDA's regulatory oversight. NITDA states that government domain applications must be submitted through the agency or via NiRA using an accredited registrar. The report said questions remain over how the PFIPC obtained approval for the domain and what verification procedures were followed before the registration was granted. This version improves readability, removes repetition, tightens the language, and presents the allegations in a balanced manner while preserving the key facts reported by Premium Times.

Meanwhile the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation has dismissed claims that the controversial Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council received public funds, insisting the body has no operational account with the Central Bank of Nigeria and has not been paid a single kobo. The clarification follows growing controversy over the council after the 2026 Appropriation Act listed the Presidential Economic Advisory Council/Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council under the Presidency with a budgetary allocation of N1.3bn. The budget includes N802.98m for personnel costs, N200m for overheads and N300m for capital expenditure. Speaking on the development, the Director of Public Relations at the OAGF, Bawa Mokwa, said although an application was made to open a CBN account for the council, the process was never completed because the required documentation was not submitted. According to him, no account can be opened at the CBN without authorization from the Accountant-General. Mokwa explained that Prince Adeniyi Adeyemi, the council's convener, approached the OAGF with what he described as an appointment letter relating to an already existing agency, prompting the office to begin processing the account-opening request. However, he said the process stalled because the names of authorized account signatories were never provided, preventing the account from becoming operational. "The account has not seen the light of day. It has not received one kobo because it was never fully activated. The Accountant-General has not released any money because there is no operational account for such payment," Mokwa said. He maintained that the council had not received any government allocation, noting that funding under the 2026 budget had not progressed to the stage where disbursements could be made. The OAGF also denied reports that salaries had been paid to workers of the council, insisting no staff had been lawfully recruited into the agency. According to Mokwa, every federal agency must first

“How did an alleged impostor gain unrestricted access to the Presidency? Who authorized the allocation of office space? Who approved the deployment of staff and budgetary resources? How were official accounts established? Who permitted him to transact with federal institutions and security agencies? These are questions that cannot simply be dismissed through a press statement. “From the reported appointment of deceased persons into public offices, to controversies surrounding the presidential pardon process, the alleged N800 billion Progressive Governors Forum scandal, and several other avoidable administrative lapses, this administration has repeatedly found itself explaining controversies that ought never to have arisen,” the party stated. The PDP urged President Tinubu to order an independent forensic investigation into the PFIPC controversy, suspend officials connected to the matter, pending the outcome of the inquiry, review administrative processes within the Presidency and issue an unreserved apology to Nigerians. “The Nigerian people deserve more than explanations. They deserve transparency, accountability, and institutions that inspire confidence rather than suspicion. Until this administration demonstrates a genuine commitment to holding itself accountable, every unresolved scandal will further erode public trust and strengthen Nigerians’ determination to demand a government that is competent, transparent, and worthy of their confidence in 2027,” Ememobong stated.

obtain approvals from the Federal Character Commission, the Budget Office and the Federal Civil Service Commission before recruiting personnel and enrolling them on the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System. He explained that only after completing those processes can the names of employees be forwarded to the Office of the Accountant-General for salary payments. “If an agency is granted a waiver to recruit, it must still obtain approvals from

the relevant agencies before presenting staff details to the Accountant-General. Without those approvals, not even one employee can be captured on the payroll,” he said.

Meanwhile in his first official reaction to the issue President Bola Ahmed Tinubu has ordered the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission, ICPC, to launch a full investigation into the so-called “Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council” — PFIPC — a body the Presidency says never existed. And he wants answers in 30 days. According to a statement by the President's Special Adviser on Information and Strategy, Bayo Onanuga, the PFIPC has “no legal backing, no presidential approval, no executive instrument”. In short: it is fake. Yet, the group was allegedly operating with boldness. The ICPC has also been told to trace the funds, find the loopholes that were exploited, and recommend how to shut them permanently. The President has ordered all MDAs to cooperate fully with ICPC and release any documents needed. In his words, the integrity of the Presidency and government institutions “must be protected from impersonation, forgery and abuse of official authority.” Anyone found culpable, he warned, would be prosecuted. For 30 days, ICPC will chase the ghost of PFIPC. For Nigerians, it's another reminder: in the name of government, fraudsters are getting creative. And this time, the President says enough. However, the National Assembly has unwittingly indicted President Bola Tinubu's Presidency, by distancing itself from the controversy surrounding the alleged inclusion of the Presidential Foreign Intervention Promotion Council, PFIPC, in the 2026 Appropriation Act, insisting that it neither created, nor inserted the Agency into the Federal budget. The Senate's position effectively shifted full responsibility to the Presidency, saying that the Executive should explain how the Agency found its way into the national budget, despite widespread allegations that it is a non-existent government body. Addressing Journalists recently after plenary, the Senate Spokesman, Yemi Adaramodu, stated that the National Assembly had no role in the creation or funding of the controversial Agency, stressing that, Lawmakers could not be blamed for its appearance in the budget. According to him, the issue is an internal matter within the Presidency, and falls outside the Senate's immediate Legislative responsibility, unless a formal petition is presented before the Chamber.

Adaramodu maintained that the Senate would not be drawn into the controversy, emphasizing that no petition concerning the PFIPC has been officially submitted for Legislative consideration. The Senate's statement marks the first official response from the National Assembly, since the controversy erupted over the Agency's inclusion in the 2026 budget. The development comes amid growing public scrutiny over the PFIPC, with conflicting claims emerging from within the Presidency, regarding the Agency's existence, legal status, and the circumstances surrounding its budgetary allocation. By declaring that Lawmakers neither established, nor inserted the Agency into the 2026 Appropriation Act, the National Assembly has placed the burden of explanation squarely on President Tinubu's administration, intensifying calls for greater transparency over the controversial budget entry. The latest position is expected to fuel further debates over accountability in Nigeria's budgeting process, as the citizens continue to await an official explanation from the Presidency, on how the disputed Agency came to be listed in the 2026 national budget.