

# Corruption In Nigeria Has Eroded The Foundation Of Economic Prosperity...*Chatham House*

**C**hatham House, the United Kingdom based policy institute, has faulted President Bola Ahmed Tinubu's claim in Brazil recently in which he claimed that his administration has stamped out corruption in Nigeria, emphasizing that sleaze remains deeply entrenched in the country. The institute pointedly said that corrupt practices have eroded the foundations of economic prosperity, weakened the rule of law, and fostered widespread distrust in critical institutions. It specifically noted that the crisis of trust in Nigeria's justice system is a stark indictment of compromised courts, widely perceived as politically captured, emphasizing that corruption has eroded the rule of law, compromised courts, and created a culture of impunity.

Chatham House, in its latest report, specifically said that corruption has continues to undermine the country's economic growth and governance structures more than ever before, stressing that this sense of corruption being intractable, has fueled frustrations among marginalized groups and driven emigration, protests, political violence, and even extremist insurgencies.

The report noted that more than half of Nigerians – approximately 54 per cent, live in poverty beyond economic damage. The report authored by Dr. Leena Hoffmann, Associate Fellow of Chatham House's Africa Program, and Comment Editor Tommy Hilton, noted that despite 25 years of reforms and anti-graft campaigns, corruption remains pervasive across government and the society in Nigeria. The report which was released few days after Tinubu's official engagement in Brazil during which he declared that his economic reforms had not only stabilized the economy but also eliminated corruption since he took over government in Nigeria. But, Chatham House in its report declared that evidence suggests otherwise, stressing that corruption has continued to define feature of Nigeria's governance, public administration and political life, thus hindering its full potential and global standing. The report particularly highlighted Nigeria's poor rankings on global governance indices, saying that the country remains among the

world's 40 most corrupt nations on the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) and ranks 35th from the bottom on the World Bank's control of corruption index. It also noted that within Africa, Nigeria sits 33rd out of 54 countries on the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance, stressing that while Nigeria boasts of the fourth-largest economy in Africa by GDP, after falling off the number one position, its GDP per capita is among the lowest on the continent which is a clear sign that corruption has stifled shared prosperity.

According to the Chatham House report; “At its core, corruption diverts public resources away from vital sectors such as education, healthcare and infrastructure, fueling poverty and inequality”.



The institute therefore warned that corruption threatens social cohesion and national unity, fostering a culture where elites and ordinary citizens alike prioritize self-interest over the collective good. Chatham House said; “This has perpetuated a vicious cycle of corruption, systemic inefficiencies and underdevelopment. A significant factor contributing to tolerance of corruption is the perception that it is the price for getting things done, and there is little or no consequence for wrongdoing. “The culture of clientelism and patronage, has normalized corrupt practices, with social connections, family ties and political allegiances often determining access to resources. Inadequate public services, unreliable basic infrastructure and bureaucratic hurdles also push citizens toward bribery to secure essential needs,” it noted.

Chatham House also linked the persistence of corruption to decades of military rule, which it said stunted democratic development, weakened enforcement by anti-graft agencies, and crippled by political interference and underfunding. Findings from Chatham House's Social Norms and Accountable Governance (SNAG) project, funded by the MacArthur Foundation, indicated that while most Nigerians disapprove of corruption, many tolerate or engage in it for survival in a dysfunctional system. The report stated; “Lower trust in governance institutions, federal, state and local governments, reflects concerns over the efficiency and transparency of government spending”.