

ICPC demands Intelligence-Based, Policy-Driven actions to tackle Corruption

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) says intelligence-based, and policy-driven approaches are the way to go if Nigeria must successfully combat corruption. Consequently, in a bold push to strengthen anti-corruption architecture through inter-governmental collaboration nationwide, the Commission is fostering synergy with State legal authorities to enhance preventive measures and anti-graft policies. Addressing a high-level roundtable engagement with State Attorneys-General from the South-East region, ICPC Chairman, Dr Musa Adamu Aliyu (SAN), stressed the urgent need for mutual cooperation and institutional alignment in the anti-corruption campaign. He said the forum is in continuation of a series of zonal consultations as part of ICPC's broader strategy to align federal and state-level legal efforts in tackling corruption.

A statement by the ICPC's spokesperson, Demola Bakare, quoted the ICPC Chairman as explaining that the South-East meeting follows earlier engagements in the South-South and North-Central regions, even as the Commission prepares for the forthcoming second national anti-corruption summit holding later this year. Dr Aliyu said, "This engagement is designed to deepen collaboration, enhance intelligence sharing, and align our strategies with both regional peculiarities and national priorities." The ICPC Chairman also used the occasion to pay glowing tribute to the late former President Muhammadu Buhari, describing him as a "moral compass" whose legacy in the anti-corruption space would remain indelible in the nation's history.

Going forward, he said it is also important to address the lingering jurisdictional friction between State and Federal anti-corruption mandates, citing landmark Supreme Court judgments in *AG of Ondo State v. AGF & 35 Ors (2002)* and the more recent *Kogi State & 18 Ors v. AGF (2024)* to affirm the constitutional powers of the ICPC to investigate and prosecute corruption across both state and federal structures. "It is counterproductive when state legal officers continue to challenge powers that have been affirmed by the highest court in the land. "As Chief Law Officers, your primary duty is to uphold the sanctity of Supreme Court decisions."

The ICPC boss, who called for an end to institutional resistance and jurisdictional rivalry, urged State Attorneys-General to view themselves as partners in a unified mission while also stressing the Commission's growing emphasis on prevention strategies over enforcement. Furthermore, he challenged them to serve as not only legal advisors but also as leading advocates for transparency and justice in their respective states, adding; "The synergy between the ICPC and State Attorneys-General is not just desirable but essential". According to him, greater cooperation in intelligence sharing, asset recovery, and legal reform would yield transformative results, just as insights shared by

participants at the Forum would shape policy and strengthen the Commission's national mandate.

On his part, former Attorney-General of Kano State, Dr. Ibrahim Mukhtar, described corruption as the root cause of Nigeria's most pressing development challenges, including poverty, unemployment, infrastructure decay, and insecurity. Delivering the keynote address at the occasion, Dr Mukhtar said, "Corruption is not abstract. Its consequences are real and devastating", even as he backed the creation of state-level anti-corruption forums chaired by Attorneys-General, and supported by ICPC, civil society organizations, and relevant ministries. He said, "These forums would act as collaborative think tanks to design context-specific strategies and share innovative practices in the fight against corruption. "We must create platforms that produce a combined effect greater than the sum of our separate efforts".



Also, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Anti-Corruption and Financial Crimes, Senator Emmanuel Udende, who delivered a goodwill message at the event, pledged the Senate's legislative backing for sub-national efforts to tackle and prevent corruption. While praising ICPC for its consistency and proactive leadership, Udende described the roundtable as a crucial step toward harmonizing federal and state anti-corruption agendas, noting that, "The work of the Attorneys-General goes beyond prosecution; you are custodians of justice and public trust. Your collaboration with the ICPC is key to deepening the reach of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy." In his intervention, Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Anti-Corruption, Rt. Hon. Kayode Moshood

Akiolu, affirmed the National Assembly's unwavering support for ICPC's mission while tasking State Attorneys-General to fully deploy their legal and moral authority against corruption. Maintaining that public officials must choose to either be defenders of the rule of law or enablers of impunity, the Lawmaker said, "Corruption is the stone tied to our feet as we try to march toward development."

The Committee Chairman, who listed corruption as the greatest threat to Nigeria's progress, expressed the National Assembly's resolve to use its law-making and oversight powers to advance accountability and strengthen governance structures across the country. The Commission's ongoing engagement is a milestone in its campaign to decentralize the anti-corruption effort, promote institutional harmony, and create a more transparent governance culture across all tiers of government. Importantly, the roundtable's outcomes will feed directly into shaping a more robust and inclusive anti-graft agenda for Nigeria with the second national anti-corruption summit to be held soon.