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Groups push harder for creation of IACC

...As 250 eminent individuals, 75 countries append signatures

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By Henry Uche

As the call for the institutionalisation of International Anti-corruption Court (IACC) is gathering more momentum, Global Civil Society Organizations have expressed optimism for its actualization as more persons and corporates append signatures to this effect.

In its quarterly newsletter, the Integrity Initiatives International (III) – the coordinating campaigner of IACC and its Nigeria Civil Society Partner- HEDA Resource Center has announced a global efforts to strengthen the enforcement of criminal laws to punish and deter corrupt leaders and end impunity for grand corruption.

In his message, the Chair of III, Judge Mark L. Wolf, said Integrity Initiatives International has catalyzed a rapidly progressing campaign to create an International Anti-Corruption Court (IACC) and has been deeply involved with the creation of the Ukraine national anti-corruption court, as well as the selection and training of its judges.

Quoting former U.K. Prime Minister- Gordon Brown, he restated, “Every day Putin continues to hold power, the case for an International Anti-Corruption Court grows.” If the IACC had been established years ago, it is more likely that Putin would now be in prison, rather than criminally killing Ukrainians.

III boss maintained that two recent events gave him even deeper understanding of the urgent importance of III’s mission of strengthening the enforcement of criminal laws against kleptocrats.

III revealed that 40-plus former Countries Presidents and Prime Ministers supported the creation of IACC. “Integrity Initiatives International (III) and Club de Madrid announced that 42 former Presidents and Prime Ministers are now among more than 250 eminent individuals from over 75 countries who have signed the Declaration calling for the creation of an International Anti-Corruption Court (IACC).

He added that the Declaration advocates for a new international court to punish and deter grand corruption – the abuse of public power for private gain by nations’ leaders (kleptocrats) – who thrives in many countries and has devastating consequences for

climate change, human rights, human health and international peace and security, as has been made tragically evident by the war in Ukraine and the loss of staggering sums of COVID-19 relief funds to fraud.

“Grand corruption has global dimensions and cannot be combatted by the affected countries alone. This is the main reason why an International Anti-Corruption Court is needed”, said Danilo Türk, President of Slovenia (2007-2012) and President of Club de Madrid.

The campaign to establish the IACC has progressed rapidly since the first 100 world leaders signed the Declaration in June 2021. III is poised to strengthen the enforcement of criminal laws to punish and deter leaders who are corrupt and regularly violate human rights.

“Corruption is a great hindrance to building trusted institutions and a threat to social stability. Fighting corruption requires our strong collective commitments and efforts”, said Prime Minister Aminata Touré, Prime Minister of Senegal (2013-2014) and Member of Club de Madrid.

III also announced in April that a total of 32 Nobel laureates have now endorsed the IACC initiative.

“Integrity Initiatives International joins the legions of vulnerable victims of kleptocrats throughout the world in being deeply grateful to the many former Prime Ministers and Presidents who recognize that an International Anti-Corruption Court is urgently needed and who are energetically striving to make it a reality”, Wolf affirmed.

On his part, the chairman of HEDA, Olanrewaju Suraju reiterated that HEDA would never back out from supporting the birth of IACC, as it would continue to engage like-minds and relevant stakeholders in Nigeria to see IACC realized.

“We organised a conference solely for IACC in Abuja where persons and corporates from the private sector but mostly from the public sector (across MDAs) gave nods. I believe the message has been passed and people can see reasons to support IACC with every resources needed.

“Malfeasances and impunity is becoming unbecoming in Nigeria, even as economic condition festers. But we shall continue the campaign, we will never give up, because corrupt practices have done (in my own words), ‘Irreparable damage’ in every sphere of our national life,” he bemoaned.

Ajiri Daniels

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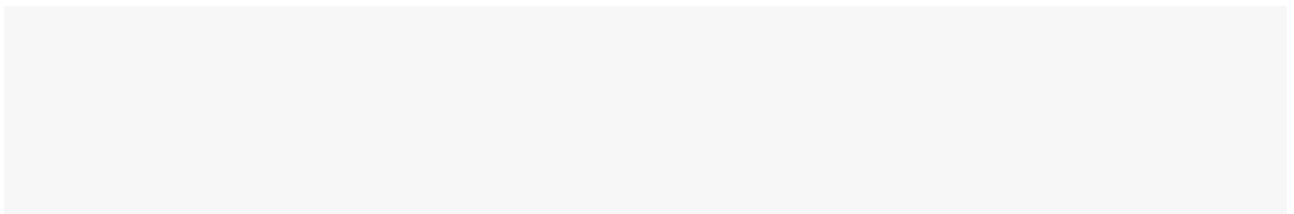
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