

## ***NIGERIAN YOUTH SAY NO TO CORRUPTION***

**By**

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Development is and will undoubtedly be the instinctive aspiration of any society, and sustainable development is and will remain the top objective of plans and strategies designed by any responsible government.

Co-existence of the consolidated rule of law, well-structured economic life and functional democracy extended to all areas of social activity is undoubtedly the main guarantee for the realization of this aspiration.

This coexistence must be defended unceasingly, with the same love, will and strength that a responsible parent protects the child from any threats to his physical and psycho-emotional wellbeing.

But to protect something, you must first have it. At what phase is Nigeria today: at a phase that should protect what it is, or at the stage of creation of what it must in principle protect? It looks like a pun, but is actually a rhetorical question. My answer goes without a doubt to the second alternative. Unfortunately, my country does not enjoy today the coexistence of the three abovementioned elements and, in my view, it is mainly due to the phenomenon of corruption.

Tanko is a poor Math student who graduates only thanks to paying some lecturers and is employed as a teacher at a secondary school. So, it is assumed that he will teach the Math concepts to Talle, a 15-year old who dreams to be an engineer. But three years of secondary school pass quickly and without quality teaching, Talle loses confidence in math and poor performance in thus subject prevents him from pursuing his studies in engineering. Demoralisation of the boy is inevitable. Corruption successfully managed to break a young boy's dream. Unfortunately, this has happened and continues to happen in Nigeria.

On the other hand, a citizen trying to solve a certain problem has to come with the barriers raised unfairly against him by judges and other officials of the corrupt justice system; undoubtedly he becomes demoralized and loses faith in the so-called "rule of law" and probably starts preparing himself to win his rights in the future through a more "trendy" and effective weapon: corruption. Corruption is now injected into the citizen as the best problem-solving approach, as the only way to render justice in an unjust justice system. One more citizen "infected" with the virus of corruption. Too bad...

Corruption weakens the foundations of the rule of law, economic life and the fragile democracy of our country and feeds on a wide range of areas such as education, health, politics, sports, etc., but

its worst effect is causing demoralization and hopelessness. In my view, lack of hope is the most frustrating element hampering the efforts of a society to move forward.

For many years, the line between legal practices and 'legal-corruptive' practices became almost invisible in my country, but I believe that recently, also thanks to the continuing calls by the international community, conditions are ripe for our society to reshape our approach to this phenomenon.

I am now 20 years old. I believe that I and other young people like me must bear the flag of this new approach. It is difficult to propose concrete solutions on a strategic level to increase efficiency in the fight against corruption in different areas, but I believe that this change must start from ourselves.

Everybody should reflect and reject and despise unequivocally and firmly any corrupt practice. And when someone is aware of such practices, the best course of action would be to report them to the competent authorities. There is no need for collective tears and complaints and moralism, but rather for concrete acts and actions.

I will make my efforts at the university, institutions and everywhere, because I want to give the message to the people around me that anti-virtue can be combated and value can prevail. I believe in the power of example.

A society that promotes the values of justice, competition of free ideas and free initiatives - even a society that works as one body for a better economy and future - is the society I want.

This is why I, as a youngster, say and will always say **NO TO CORRUPTION!**

Crime fawns crime, and corruption fawns corruption and injustice. It is a vicious circle that must be stopped ... NOW!