

**THE CHALLENGES OF FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN NIGERIA:
ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES BEING A LECTURE DELIVERED BY YUSUF
ALI SAN AT OGUN STATE JUDICIARY 2016/2017 MUSLIM LEGAL
YEAR SERVICE ON 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2016 AT EGBA CENTRAL
MOSQUE, KOBITI, ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE.**

Introduction

I thank Allah for sparing our lives to witness this Muslim Legal Year Service and I thank the organizers of the event for the invitation extended to me to deliver this lecture.

It is beyond doubt that by all accounts, the fight against corruption in Nigeria has over the years been daunting, contentious and very challenging. In Nigeria, corruption is akin to cancer. It is like a ball of snow, once it is set rolling it always increases. Indeed this has been the Nigerian experience with corruption increasing to such staggering proportions that it is now not only a bane of the country, but has largely defied present and past efforts to stem it.

The situation now is that corruption is so entrenched that anyone hoping to do any kind of business with the Nigerian bureaucracy, must take corruption into account. Indeed the situation is now so bad that even some government officials are alleged to bribe one another to get government business done.

There are indications that many Nigerians, some of them politicians, retired civil servants, judges, and even generals in the army, are involved in corrupt practices.

Indeed politicians are often placed in apparently compromising positions because of their desperate need to solicit financial contributions ostensibly for their campaigns, but in reality for rigging elections. They appear sometimes to be acting

in the interests of those parties that sponsor them, but mostly they are driven by personal aggrandizement.

For the most part, corruption has bedeviled Nigeria's political scene encompassing abuses by government officials such as embezzlement and nepotism, as well as abuses of public and private sectors through corrupt practices such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud.

Corruption in Nigeria has attained a level that the question that Nigerians should be asking is not 'who is corrupt'? but rather, 'who is not corrupt'? That this must be so is evident from the way many Nigerians today seem to live above their visible legitimate incomes.

So worrisome is the fact that corruption has permeated religious leaders who are ordinarily expected to be free from corruption and instill sense of honesty, sincerity, truthfulness, integrity and candor to people. Corruption saturates all aspect of public life and the entire Nigerian society because of the general opinion and belief that public and private business and even religious matters cannot make progress without indulging in some corrupt practices.

Many strategies have been put in place to fight corruption in Nigeria but none has been effective so far. In other words, the fight against corruption has been approached in many ways and dimensions with no apparent success till now. The challenge of fighting corruption is getting more daunting and frightening, while corruption itself is getting more rooted in our country with its tentacles everywhere.

This lecture is therefore aimed at looking at Islamic perspectives in fighting corruption in Nigeria with a task to explaining what is understood by corruption conventionally and in Islamic perspective. In other words, the purpose of this

lecture, therefore, is to rehash the numerous social problems and challenges that our country faces as a result of the menace of corruption and highlight some practical and specific solutions to the problems from Islamic perspective.

To this end, causes and faces of corruption will be explained. The lecture will also touch the effect of corruption on nation building and Islamic approach as panacea to the problem of corruption and finally, some recommendations will be made on how the fight against corruption may be won.

What is corruption?

Many people and scholars have tried to describe what is meant and understood by corruption. Laws are also not silent on what amounts to corruption.

Corruption is a form of dishonest or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit. Corruption may include many activities including bribery and embezzlement, though it may also involve practices that are legal in many countries. Government, or 'political', corruption occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain.

Stephen D. Morris, a professor of politics, writes that political corruption is the illegitimate use of public power to benefit a private interest.

Economist, *Ian Senior* defines corruption as an action to (a) secretly provide (b) a good or a service to a third party (c) so that he or she can influence certain actions which (d) benefit the corrupt, a third party, or both (e) in which the corrupt agent has authority.

Daniel Kaufmann, from the World Bank, extends the concept of corruption to include 'legal corruption' in which power is abused within the confines of the law as those with power often have the ability to make laws for their protection.

According to *Ruzindana* he asserts that corruption in Africa is a problem of routine deviation from established standards and norms by public officials and parties with whom they interact. He also identified the types of corruption in Africa as bribery, private gain, and other benefits to non-existent workers and pensioners (called ghost workers). The dishonest and illegal behavior exhibited especially by people in authority for their personal gain is corruption.

By the provision of Section 2 of the ICPC Act, corruption includes vices like bribery, fraud, and other related offences. Corruption is the abuse or misuse of power or position of trust for personal or group benefit, monetary or otherwise.

Corruption is a symptom of numerous difficulties within contemporary societies. It usually involves more than one party. It takes a form of an organized crime. At times, an organization can be established on corruption to beget corruption.

In philosophical, theological and moral discussions, the term corruption has been defined as spiritual or moral impurity or deviation from an ideal. In economy, corruption is payment for services or material to which the recipient is not due, under law. This may be called bribery, kickback, or baksheesh. In general sense, corruption is highly related to materialistic tendencies due to real needs caused by desire to live beyond one's means, which tends to manifest in the desire to become distinguished by all means among one's peers.

In Islam, any action and deed of mankind that flout justice or rule of law at home, place of work, school, playground, etc are acts of corruption. Islam being an all

encompassing and all inclusive, complete and comprehensive way of life; sees corruption in a larger sense.

Scales of corruption

Corruption can occur on different scales. There is corruption that occurs as small favors between a small number of people (petty corruption), corruption that affects the government on a large scale (grand corruption), and corruption that is so prevalent that it is part of the everyday structure of society, including corruption as one of the symptoms of organized crime (systemic corruption).

Petty corruption

Petty corruption occurs at a smaller scale and takes place at the implementation end of public services when public officials meet the members of the public. Examples include the exchange of small improper gifts or use of personal connections to obtain favours or a speedy completion of routine government procedures. This form of corruption is usually pursued by junior and middle level officials, who are significantly underpaid.

Grand corruption

Grand corruption is defined as corruption occurring at the highest levels of government in a way that requires significant subversion of the political, legal and economic systems. Such corruption is commonly found in countries with authoritarian or dictatorial governments but also in those without adequate policing of corruption.

The government system in many countries is divided into the legislative, executive and judiciary branches in an attempt to provide independent services that are less subject to grand corruption due to their independence from one another.

Systemic corruption

Systemic corruption (or endemic corruption) is corruption which is primarily due to the weaknesses of an organization or process. It can be contrasted with individual officials or agents who act corruptly within the system.

Factors which encourage systemic corruption include conflicting incentives, discretionary powers; monopolistic powers; lack of transparency; low pay; and a culture of impunity.

Faces of Corruption

Corruption takes many forms and can be interpreted and viewed by many people in many ways. It is hard to enter any sector in Nigeria today without observing one corrupt practice or the other. The areas where corruption is observed are not only in the public sector or in politics. It is everywhere including private sector even in domestic arena. Sincerely, the faces of corruption are numerous. Because of time constraint, I shall briefly but in practical terms, discuss the 3 prominent and more pronounced faces of corruption in Nigeria.

Political Corruption

Books have been written, people have talked, and the press has been writing on the high level of corruption in Nigerian politics, yet the political perpetrators pretend as if they are not the people being talked about. They feel they are above the law.

Political corruption takes many shapes, starting with embezzlement, bribery, rituals, rigging in elections and so on. In fact, in the hierarchy of corruption in Nigeria, political corruption takes the highest degree. In both the Senate and the House of Representatives, corruption is seen as normal. The youth and the old struggle to find themselves in one political office or the other because of the wicked level of corruption in the country. They believe that once they occupy any position in politics, even the lowest, they will use corrupt tricks to fill their pockets with public funds.

Embezzlement of public funds is common. Many leaders have helped boost the economies of other nations by depositing embezzled money in foreign banks. Facts and figures have shown that on many occasions, the men who rule the country have embezzled funds funneled into foreign banks.

Political corruption is persistent in the Nigerian state. Since the creation of modern public administration in the country, there have been cases of official misuse of resources for personal enrichment.

As of a few years back, whenever it was time for election in Nigeria, small children in the country began to go missing. Child missing during that period was rampant. This is another face of corruption that breaks the hearts of mothers. The missing children were used by contesting politicians to perform ritual killings in order to get protections and other devilish powers that will enable them win elections. This is corruption and wickedness of the highest order because it involves the termination of human life.

Election rigging is a common phenomenon which is an aspect of political corruption. During elections, the contestants hire thugs who go round the election polling stations to highjack ballot boxes. When they steal these boxes, they then

use their hands to vote for their candidate. In the recent times, the new tactics that the contestants have adopted is buying voter's cards so that they can manipulate and use the cards for their own advantages. This is a face of corruption. Tongues are still waging on the recent primary election of one of the political parties in Ondo State about the level of monetization of the delegates some of whom we were told got as much as *N300,000.00* to vote.

Corruption in the Universities and Colleges

It is not new to any Nigerian to hear that corruption parades itself buoyantly in universities, polytechnics and colleges. There are certain things that lecturers do that deserve "hot punishment." Most lecturers use the opportunity they have to take advantage of others. Harassment of ladies by lecturers and pressure to sleep with them is common. After some of the female undergraduates submit to the lecturers request, they are rewarded with undeserved good grades.

How do some students find their ways into the universities? Some are there not by merit, but through a kind of bribery called sorting. Some rich men in the country bribe vice-chancellors and heads of departments to secure admission for their children. When this kind of dirty practice is conducted, those who would have made it on merit are cheated, as no admission will be offered to them.

Corruption in the Police Force

Where do we start when it comes to the nature of corruption observed in the police? Do we start with the bribery, intimidation, sexual harassment of the young inmates in the custody, or turning truth upside down? There is a saying that "police are your friends" In Nigeria policemen are your enemies because they can deny the truth and collect bribes to do so. Because of the encounter many Nigerians have had with policemen, even the good ones among them are generalized as being bad.

Those police who mount checkpoints on the roads cannot do most times collect bribes from car owners and drivers. Their interest is to collect money from road users and not to secure the roads. Bribes become compulsory even when your particulars are in order. Bus drivers must offer money before they continue with their transportation business. The police are now turning to gods that receive money from worshippers as offerings.

Causes of Corruption

A number of things cause corruption in Nigeria, and among them are: Greed, Poor youth empowerment, Poverty and Unemployment

Greed

Greed has caused a lot of crises in the world, including Nigeria. It is because of greed that political leaders embezzle from the funds they are supposed to use for national development for their own selfish ends.

Poor Youth Empowerment

Poor youth empowerment is a contributor to corruption. Internet fraud, sexual harassment by male and other bad acts are because Nigerians lack understanding on the importance of youth empowerment. When parents and governments empower youths both financially and morally, the level of corruption among them will diminish.

Poverty

According to international standards of poverty, a person is said to be poor when he lives under \$1.25 (₦210, though it varies) per day. There are many in such category in Nigeria and their being pushed into one corrupt practice or the other.

We have had several instances where people are paid just **₦2,000** or even less to kill for rituals or for political reason. In the same vein, poor youths in the country are paid very meager amount to act as thugs for politicians.

Unemployment

Unemployment is one of the major challenges in Nigeria and does not need much explanation because it has broken the hearts of many citizens. People are pushed into corrupt practice because of high level of unemployment. An unemployed citizen can be tempted to indulge in corruption to make money and live better.

The youths, fathers and mothers are seriously lamenting on the negative impact of unemployment in their lives.

Effects of Corruption on the Nation Building

The negative consequences of corruption are many, and among them are: Poor investment, rise in poverty, poor national development and National crises. I shall briefly discuss them one after the other.

Poor Investment

Unemployment in Nigeria would have been eradicated to some extent if only investors are attracted and encouraged to invest in the country. Companies that would have invested in Nigeria are afraid because they do not know if the corrupt practice will ruin their businesses. Because of this, they refuse to invest in Nigeria. More so, the effect of corruption has resulted to insecurity. It need not be said that no wise investor will invest his resources in a country devoid of security like Nigeria.

Rise in Poverty

When the heads of public service are busy laundering the money that is supposed to be used to create employment for the masses and reduce poverty, what happens is that there will be a rise in the poverty level of the country as we have today in Nigeria.

Poor National Development

Any country with high corruption like Nigeria is likely to experience developmental bankruptcy. A situation where some CEOs indulge in corrupt practices to make their money means that economic development will suffer. When Nigerians keep on our commonwealth illegally to foreign countries, there will be less economic development in Nigeria.

National Crises

So many crises in Nigeria today are as a result of corruption. The insecurity in Nigeria brought about by Boko Haram is a consequence of corruption. The attacks by Boko Haram have caused disorderliness in Nigeria and seriously affected the economy of the country. It has greatly repelled intending investors and by extension, affected the economic status of the country.

Islamic approach as panacea to Corruption

Islam is the only perfect way of life. It enjoins the maintenance of a refined standard of character. It has solution to all human problems. It is the only hope for overcoming the present and future challenges of life. The future of Islam is the future of humanity. Islam commands righteousness and forbids wrong doings and evil deeds. In other words, it commands all noble moral and forbids all ill and despicable behaviour. It is the complete guidance towards righteousness, and

hence, success. The most valued virtues of a Muslim include truthfulness, justice; helping the poor and the needy; respecting parents, scholars, teachers and elders; love and kindness for children, the widows and the poor. Likewise, it prohibits blasphemy, murders, terrorism, oppression, injustice, enmity, misery, adultery, drug addiction, suicide, graft which are harbingers of corruption.

Islam is a complete way of life. Its teachings are full of truth, wisdom and virtues; and taken altogether, they are a perfect guide to mankind or society of all ages, generations, races, and social strata and full of solutions to any kind of challenges including corruption. Allah in *Quran 6:38* says: “...***Nothing have we omitted from the Book (Quran)...***”

Quran as revealed by itself in several chapters, is guidance for the world, solution of every human problem, evidence, discrimination between right and wrong and a manifest light for the people to guide them aright and help them in all their needs.

Corruption being one of the problems militating against human development must therefore, have a solution in the Quran more especially, going by the provision of *Quran 6:38* quoted above.

In the course of this lecture, I have identified the causes of corruption to be greed, poor youth empowerment (both economically and morally), poverty and unemployment. To now tackle the problem of corruption adopting Islamic approach, it is pertinent to consider and explore the structures, tenets and teachings of an ideal Islamic society and its ways of life and how the structures, tenets and teachings can be adopted in fighting against corruption.

The basic features of the structure of Islam are found in the Quran and *Sunnah*. *Quran 3:110* says:

“You (true believers in Islamic Monotheism, and real followers of Prophet Mohammed and his Sunnah) are the best of communities ever raised up for mankind: you enjoin the good, forbid the evil, and believe in Allah...”

From this verse, three of the characteristics of an ideal Islamic society are revealed by Allah, namely: Enjoining good, forbidding evils and having faith in Allah. The three characteristics if thoroughly and sincerely adopted will with no doubt, aid our fight against corruption. I shall briefly discuss them.

Enjoining Good

In a society where all the people or even majority of them do good, that society becomes earthly paradise as the rewards and results of good are nothing but good. Quran Chapter 55 Verse 60 says: ***“Is there any reward for good other than good?”*** Unfortunately, majority of the people in Nigeria do not do good. That is why we found ourselves in the situation we are in today. There is no doubt; all the corrupt practices that are being perpetrated in this country are nothing but evils; and the perpetrators are not morally upright.

Islam identifies corruption as a moral and ethical problem of an individual. It also provides the ability to foster self – restrain through the knowledge of Quranic ethical framework for human behavior, e.g. by applying justice, equity, honesty, fear of Allah, decency, moral values and accountability. This is because Islam has an ethical component often derived from the Holy Quran. Allah in ***Quran 11:85*** says:

“O my people give full measure and Full weight with equity and defraud Not people of their things and Commit not inequity in the earth causing disorder”.

The above verse shows not only the remarkable role Islam demonstrates in denouncing any form of evils including corruption but also promotes morality and justice for the betterment of mankind, rule of law, environmental balance, peace and harmony in the society. Islam only focuses on promoting and enforcing a code of universal values which defines the relationship that humans have with Allah and all creation among which are justice, equity, which enhance not only human happiness but also brings transformation with a clean and honest society. Therefore, if good is enjoined, corruption will be shunned.

Forbidding the evil

This is clearly complimentary to the first characteristic. When people do good, definitely evil is shunned or forbidden. Therefore, the two characteristics go together.

A person who does good and forbids evil will not embezzle funds or resources meant for the generality of the people or indulge in any other form of corruption. In other words, any society with application or implementation of these two characteristics will not be a corrupt society. The two characteristics are clearly lacking in our society; hence our present condition.

Islam totally discourages all sinful and unlawful accumulation of wealth. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) enjoin Muslims to desist from illegal enrichment of themselves when he was reported to have said:

“The flesh that grows out of unlawful income has no place in the hereafter but hell”

Another Prophetic *hadith* further indicated that Prophet (PBUH) was said to have frowned at a *zakat* collector who was involved in the abuse of office by enriching himself illegally. Prophet (PBUH) remarked that:

“What rights have you to put aside something that does not belong to you. If you were to remain in your father’s house would you get what you are taking?”

In Islam, corruption is regarded as human behavior due to moral and ethical problems. The Holy Qur’an further differentiates between people on the basis of their behavior and ethics in relation to corruption. *Quran 38:28* states:

“Shall we treat those who believe and work deeds of righteousness, the same as those who do mischief on earth? Shall we treat those who guard against evil, the same as those who turn aside from the right?”

Islam therefore provides a moral framework for fighting corruption in our society. A Muslim faithful is enjoined to be above board about in his morals. Muslims should remain conscious of Allah, whether in private or in public, speak justly, whether angry or pleased, show moderation both when dealing with the poor or rich. Muslims should command what is right. It must be noted that doing good and having the right belief go hand in hand in Islam. The most fundamental characteristic of a Muslim is piety, humility and fear of Allah, the Creator.

Islam teaches Muslims to be in control of their passion and desires. Muslims must not only be virtuous but they must also enjoin virtue. They must not only refrain from evil and vice but they must also forbid them. They should be morally healthy and must also contribute to the moral health of the society. Morally, Islam

addresses every aspect of a Muslim's Life, from corruption, to walking on the street, from neighborliness to international relations, from leadership, to followership, etc. Islam therefore calls upon Muslims to behave in a just and ethical manner that is conducive to sustainable development by forbidding evil.

Having faith in Allah

Having faith in Allah, the Creator, the destiny Maker and the Provider of all provisions is very paramount in every individual's life. Absence of faith in Allah could lead to corruption as we experience in Nigeria. If a public officer has faith in Allah and believes in Him as the ultimate Provider, he would not steal or squander public resources entrusted to him. The *Quran 65:2-3* says:

“...And whoever fears Allah He will make for him a way out. And will provide for him from where he does not expect. And whoever relies upon Allah- then he is sufficient for him. Indeed, Allah will accomplish His purpose. Allah has already set for everything a (decreed) extent.”

It is observable that in this society of ours, the fear of Allah is on zero level even in the midst of the clerics of both religions, who are expected to instill the fear of Allah into our hearts. The affection towards worldly and materialistic life has corrupted our hearts. Most people have become slaves of this perishing life to such an extent that they consider the rich and those who have gained this world and its splendor or luxuries to be the most successful. Hence, the lust or temptation to steal and squander public treasury whenever the opportunity comes up, or to indulge in any other form of corruption.

Apart from the 3 characteristics of an ideal Islamic society discussed above, other characteristics of an ideal Islamic society which may be adopted in curbing corruption are generosity and social justice.

Generosity

Generosity is one of the ethics of the Prophets, a pillar of faith and a ray of the light of firm faith. The Noble Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

"The Auliya Allah - Friends of Allah (SWT) are, essentially and inherently, generous."

Hence, in order to acquire this attribute, one should endeavour to be munificent and generous towards relatives, deserving ones and the like, for the pleasure of Allah.

Quran 92:5-7 say:

"Then as for him who gives away and guards (against evil), and accepts the best, We will facilitate for him the easy end."

Also the Prophet (SAW) said:

"Nothing shall ensure the welfare (and interests) of your religion except generosity and good disposition."

It was also reported by *Jabir Ibn Abdullah Ansari* that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) never disappointed anyone who asked for his help.

It is beyond argument that we are not equally financially and materially endowed. Some are rich, while some are poor. To balance this natural inequality, Islam

established the institution of *Zakat* and made it a very fundamental pillar of Islam and thus a major characteristic of Islamic society.

The institution of *Zakat* is the cornerstone of the Islamic socio-economic system. It is emphasized by the Quran as a critical component of socio-economic justice. It works to ensure an equitable distribution of wealth and establishes a safety net for needy members of the society. Both the sources and disbursement categories of *Zakat* are specified in Islam. One very positive economic effect of *Zakat* is an increase the money supply and a consequent increase in the demand for goods and services. *Zakat* provides debt relief and enhances price stability. If accumulated in times of prosperity, *Zakat* funds can aid society through times of depression or recession as we are experiencing in Nigeria today. As observed earlier, the major causes of corruption are poor youth empowerment, poverty and unemployment, *Zakat* is the very institution in Islam to cater for theses very negative situations.

Unfortunately, *Zakat* is considerably out of use in our society. It is an insignificant number of the people who are qualified to pay *Zakat* that pay it. To worsen the situation, when it is paid, it is mostly paid to wrong persons. How can one justify *Zakat* being paid to *Mallams* who themselves are qualified to pay *Zakat*. The implication of this is that wealth is concentrated in one place. It is not spread. Therefore, the reason and purpose for which *Zakat* was established in Islam are lost; and this has serious negative effect on the socio-economic lives of the populace. The rich is getting richer, while the poor is getting poorer since the wealth is concentrated in few hands. The resultant effect of this is that the poor indulge in one corrupt practice or the other to get rich while the poor do that for their greed, but both for lack of faith in Allah.

Social Justice

Islam eradicates the corruption menace through implementation of justice, which is the central value of a nation. Islamic social justice instills fear of Allah and equitable distribution of wealth through proper administration of **Zakat**, provision of basic needs/necessities and protection of the weak from economic exploitation by the strong. Proper application of this kind of justice will ensure eradication of corruption. Justice is the fountain of peace.

Effective and efficient implementation of Islamic social justice will provide the framework for anti-corruption initiatives. This is because the Islamic political system and leadership position of power in the Muslim society are accountable not only to the people in the society but ultimately, to their Creator, Allah. Islam teaches that leaders are servants of their followers. They are recommended to seek for the welfare of their subjects and guide them towards what is good. The Prophet (PBUH) was reported in to have declared that:

“A ruler has been entrusted with affairs of Muslims but make no endeavor for their material and moral uplift and not sincerely concerned (for their welfare) will not enter paradise along with them.”

Islamic justice system demands transparent and honest leadership, restraining from evil, illegal enrichment or any other form of corrupt practices. The Prophet (PBUH) was reported to have said:

“Whosoever from you is appointed by us to a position of authority and he conceals from us a needle or something smaller than that, it

will be misappropriation (of public funds) and (he) will (have to) produce it on the day of judgment”.

Generally Islamic system of justice teaches that mankind is the vicegerent of Allah on earth and is therefore accountable to Allah for their deeds and choices. Such responsibilities and accountability provide the motivation not only to abide by Islamic moral and ethical code but restrain mankind from any act of corrupt practices. The Islamic central concept of accountability, justice and ethical behaviour not only provide the foundation of ethical transparency and accountability but corruption cannot continue to grow in a society of believers sharing a common faith with common knowledge of the hereafter. The Prophet (PBUH) was reported to have warned that:

“Beware of bribery for verily it is a sheer infidelity, and the briber will not even smell the fragrance of paradise”.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Corruption is a serious and age old menace which constitutes devastating impact on the society. It covers a wide range of illegal practices which undermines fear of Allah, morality, decency, social justice and good governance, rule of law, harmony, peace, progress and development. However, Islam provides a complete and comprehensive universal guidance and perfect solution to all human problems as clearly indicated above.

This being the case, it is therefore my sincere recommendation that all the teachings of Islam as discussed above be imbibed by all so as to eradicate corruption in our society.

In addition to that, I will like to suggest the following to be undertaken by the government and all the stakeholders in our fight against corruption:

1. Effective and impartial use of anti-graft agencies

The establishment of the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) as well as the Code of Conduct Bureau and its Tribunal is a laudable start on the war against corruption. Unfortunately, though some successes have been recorded by these bodies, the general impression is that these bodies have gone after the tail of the monster of corruption rather than its head. It is not helpful that some politicians meanwhile allege that these bodies are being used by the government of the day as instruments of blackmail or vendetta against political opponents. There is therefore a need to expand the activities and range of instruments available to these bodies effectively and in an unbiased manner. The agencies must operate transparently.

2. More efforts on detection of Corruption

Indeed, an effective war on corruption has to be fought on, at least, the three axis of (a) Prevention, (b) Detection, and (c) Sanctions and Restitutions. While to date some efforts have been made in terms of the prevention (e.g. the Due Process mechanism) and sanctions of corruption offenders, present efforts being made to detect corruption are at best half-hearted.

To fight corruption therefore, Nigeria clearly needs robust corruption detection and bursting agency as up and doing, and as zealous as the Nigerian Police Force sometimes demonstrates at road check points, and the SSS always exhibits in matters of the President's personal security.

3. Vigorous Prevention mechanism

If corruption is to be given a short shrift in Nigeria, then the social, business and bureaucratic environments must be corruption-hostile rather than friendly. This means that there must be well funded comprehensive public education and enlightenment programs on the nature of corruption as well as the negative effects of corruption in the Nigerian polity. This is a job that the National Orientation Agency (NOA) as well as the Federal and State Ministries of Information must undertake. This could take the form of well tested public enlightenment techniques such as the use of hand bills, public posters, print media, adverts, Radio and TV jingles. At the same time, the citizenry must be made aware of the stiff penalties that await those that engage in corrupt practices. To this end, certain legal instruments must be put in place to enable unfettered corruption detection, arraignment and conviction to be facilitated within a very short time.

With this, it is my belief that the fight against corruption in our country will be a success.

Thanks for your patience and attention. *Ma'a Salaam.*