



LIBERIA ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION



Congo Town Back Road, Monrovia, Liberia
Cell #: 0886519292/0777519292/0886514919

Press Release

LACC, USAID, UNDP CELEBRATES IACD 2019 INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

Monday, December 9, 2019: The Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC) in collaboration with USAID/LPAC and UNDP on Monday, December 9, 2019 concluded programs in celebration of International Anti-Corruption Day (IACD). This year's celebration which took place in Ganta, Nimba County was held from December 6-9, 2019 with series of activities.

Delivering the keynote address, The National Chief Imam of Liberia, Sheikh Ali Krayee said, while it is true parents and religious institutions have their roles in the fight against corruption; the education system cannot be reformed without the government.

He said the country is in need of a comprehensive education reform; and noted if just one billion dollars of funds spent by UNMIL in Liberia was directed to the revival and modernization of the education sector, with morality and merit system firmly mainstreamed into the curriculum, it would have been much easier to stand united against corruption.

He noted that integrity institutions worldwide should formulate effective programs to strengthen the Legislature and Judiciary because they are the backbones of our democracy and embodiment of our hopes.

He said that there have been men and women of integrity in the first branch of government. "However, we continue to say that our legislature has, for the most part been a useless burden on taxpayers so the International transparency bodies and related organizations should exert necessary pressure that would keep the legislature awake to play the role it has been charged with".

The Chief Imam ended by saying that, corruption has never lost any battle against its enemies. “It is true that in some cases, it suffers temporary setbacks but then in a short time, it gets reinforced and launches a counter attack that forces those who fight it to beg for mercy”.

Delivering his Anti-Corruption Message at the program, Commissioner Charles J.L. Gibson said, monumental steps taken by government to tackle corruption head-on, evolving realities in both the public and private sectors show that corruption has eluded us as public enemy and has become our private friend.

The Commissioner, however noted that LACC is leaving no stones unturned in making sure that corrupt public officials are investigated and forwarded to the Ministry of Justice for prosecution.

Commissioner Gibson said the lack of direct prosecutorial power for the Commission is a recipe for delay and a major drawback to the fight against corruption. In this regard, he recommended the granting of direct prosecutorial power to the LACC in support of the fight against corruption and in consonance with the legal doctrine of speedy trial.

Granting direct prosecutorial power to LACC, he asserted, will be a giant step in the right direction, as it will enhance witness protection and quality of evidence during trials.

He challenged Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to rally public support and advocate for the establishment of a specialized corruption court.

This, he said, will salvage the nagging problem of delays in the assignment of corruption cases due to overcrowded court dockets.

Commissioner Gibson called on all stakeholders in the fight against corruption to generate the needed political will to combat corruption.

In this regard, he admonished the President, the Legislature and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia to champion the fight against corruption.

He further said, the fight against corruption is a fight for survival. “ It is not a fight we can choose to lose, as this year theme depicts; ‘Together we are united against corruption’; which tells us that we all are in this boat together, fighting for our country.”

“In spite of the Commission’s determination to name, shame and prosecute corrupt public officials, integrity is still a scarce commodity in Liberia’s public service” he lamented.

He then commended government officials who have kept the public trust and described them as the true champions of good governance, sustainable peace and development. He called on all well-meaning Liberians to salute honest and truthful ministers, managing directors, commissioners and civil servants who work tirelessly for Liberia’s progress.

The theme for the 2019 International Anti-Corruption Day Celebration was “**Together we can Fight Against Corruption**“. This year’s program was sponsored by UNDP and USAID/LPAC.

Edwin J. Clarke, Jr.
Public Relations Officer