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### **In UK, Bawa Calls on World Leaders to Rise to the Challenge of Fighting Corruption**

The Chairman of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission, EFCC, Abdulrasheed Bawa, has called on leaders across the world to rise to the challenge of fighting corruption to enhance global economic development and security.

He made the appeal on Friday September 10, 2021, while presenting a paper entitled, “Combating of Crime, Corruption and implication for Development and Security”, at the 38th Cambridge International Symposium on Economic Crime, organized by the Center for International Documentation on Organized and Economic Crime (CIDOEC), Jesus College, University of Cambridge,, United Kingdom.

According to the EFCC boss who was represented by his Deputy Chief of Staff, Sambo Mayana, economic and financial crimes including corruption, which manifest in various forms in different nations, are at the core of global development and security challenges. Citing a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD, he noted that, “Resources that could support a country’s development are lost through criminal acts like corruption, tax evasion, money laundering, and others.

“The “spoiler” effects on countries’ development processes are diverse, and particularly severe for fragile states: economic crime, including illicit financial flows, diverts much needed resources needed to rebuild countries’ public services, from security and justice to basic social services such as health and education”.

The EFCC chair said the absence of substantial improving in the living condition of the people in Africa and the rest of the developing countries, in spite of their natural resources endowment, can be blamed on pervasive economic crimes taking place in these countries.

“The incidence of illegal mining, smuggling of goods, tax evasion, illegal oil bunkering, illegal arms deals just to mention but a few does not allow the government to receive the full accruals from the continent’s vast resources that are needed for development. The revenue generated are embezzled by government officials and their collaborators in the private sector. This does not allow for economic growth and by extension a hindrance to development”, he said.

Speaking on the Nigerian experience, Bawa disclosed that over N 6 Trillion has been expended so far on the war against terrorism in Nigeria since 2008 while about N5.4 Trillion was lost to tax evasion by multi-nationals corporations operating in the country from 2011 – 2021. This is aside the theft of resources in the nation’s oil and gas sector.

The EFCC chair however noted that all hope was not lost as the country, under the administration of President Muhammadu Buhari, has demonstrated commitment and political will in dealing with the issue of economic crimes through a number of legislative and institutional reforms.

At the level of the EFCC as the central agency coordinating the fight against economic crime in Nigeria, Bawa said the agency has been up front.in tackling the malaise with tremendous successes. According to him, records show that as at August 2021, the EFCC has well over 3408 convictions

“From the time I took over as the Executive Chairman, on the 5th of March 2021, we have recovered over N6 billion, over \$161 million, over £13,000, €1,730, 200 Canadian dollars, CFA 373,000, ¥8,430 and 30 Real Estates. We have arrested over 1500 internet fraudsters, many of whom are being prosecuted,” he added.

Media & Publicity  
10 September, 2021

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