

UPF-Nigeria Starts Anti-Corruption Campaign

Raphael Ogar Oko
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Abuja, Nigeria—UPF-Nigeria is mobilizing its Ambassadors for Peace to assist the federal government's efforts to end corruption in the nation.

UPF will launch the Ambassadors for Peace National Action Committee on Corruption in September 2015 as part of activities to mark the United Nations' International Day of Peace (September 21).

In a statement released on August 20, 2015, UPF-Nigeria Secretary General Dr. Raphael Ogar Oko said: "The emergence of the new government in Nigeria since May 29, 2015, has provided an opportunity for Nigerians to confront one of the major challenges facing the nation for several decades. The issue of corruption has been the bane of the Nigerian nation, and the present government under the leadership of President [Muhammadu] Buhari has expressed the desire to combat corruption in Nigeria.

"Several initiatives are being considered by the government to confront the menace. It is important that Ambassadors for Peace are mobilized to complement the efforts of the government in ways that the change agenda of the government will address the issue in a sustainable way and with respect to fundamental human rights and in accordance with global best practices."

The statement said that the anti-corruption committee "will seek to mobilize and create public awareness of sustainable ways of addressing corruption, especially with a focus on corruption potential policy analysis. The committee will convene a special forum to discuss public policies that have the potential to fertilize corruption."

Dr. Oko stated that political parties' expenditure of huge personal funds for public leadership contributes to the corruption of political leaders. The planned committee will offer recommendations and technical assistance to relevant government agencies on innovative strategies with which to combat corruption.

Being aware that corruption threatens the realization of peace in the nation, UPF has recognized the need for Ambassadors for Peace to become actively involved in bringing corruption under control in Nigeria. The committee will hold programs to enlighten the public on corruption, network with other stakeholders and inspire the citizens and government with the universal principles of peace, specifically in ending corruption as a prerequisite for a peaceful nation. UPF also will introduce a nationwide public education program tagged "Living Corruption Free: A Zero Corruption Lifestyle."

Innovative approaches to overcoming corruption include the establishment of a culture of living without corruption, building a community of incorruptible citizens and developing an infrastructure for eradicating corruption. In this way, UPF hopes to complement the efforts of the federal government with the hope that by 2020, Nigeria will have left the list of most corrupt nations in the world.

"If we shall arrive at a sustainable campaign against corruption by politicians, we must bring to an end those political party policies that are capable of fertilizing corruption," Dr. Oko said in the statement.

"We must bring to an end the era in which candidates have to spend personal money to be elected into public positions. No one will spend personal money for public position and will not expect a return on their investment," he said.

"These are some of the hidden issues that continue to fuel corruption in our society today, and the Ambassadors for Peace are determined to work with the government to defeat corruption in Nigeria."