

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Centre for Transparency Advocacy

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"Charting a Path for Progress: Celebrating Democracy Day and Envisioning a Brighter Future for Nigeria"

Democracy Day, celebrated annually on June 12th, marks Nigeria's triumphant transition from military rule to democracy since 1999, underscoring the struggles, sacrifices, and progress in the pursuit of democratic governance. The 1993 general elections, widely deemed the freest and fairest in Nigeria's history, give profound historical weight to this date.

In this spirit, the Centre for Transparency Advocacy (CTA) salutes the nation's citizens and outlines a comprehensive roadmap for the newly elected government. This day serves as a reminder of Nigeria's democratic journey and a call to continually strive for good governance, justice, and inclusive representation.

Promoting Inclusivity:

The CTA recognises inclusivity as a pillar of a thriving democracy. We urge the government to ensure fair representation and active engagement of all citizens, emphasising gender equality, youth participation, and the amplification of marginalised voices. More specifically, the government can increase quotas for underrepresented groups in political appointments or electoral constituencies and could actively engage citizens through community forums, town hall meetings, and social media platforms that allow for direct communication between citizens and government officials.

Addressing Oil Subsidy Removal:

Recognizing the challenges posed by oil subsidies and their impact on the economy, we advocate for a phased approach to subsidy removal. We urge the government to accompany such a measure with a comprehensive plan that alleviates the burden on vulnerable citizens. It is essential to implement robust palliatives and social safety nets to mitigate the immediate effects and provide support during this transition. For instance, heavy subsidy on transportation infrastructure and investment in the bus transport system across the states with low fares. Building of light rails has become imperative. The health and education sector should equally receive good attention by the government as well as subsidising farm products especially from the rural communities.

Managing Extractives and Natural Resources:

Responsible and transparent management of extractive industries and natural resources is crucial for sustainable development. We call for the establishment of robust regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to prevent corruption, ensure accountability, and promote equitable distribution of

benefits. It is imperative to prioritize environmentally sustainable practices that protect the rights and well-being of local communities.

The government should support Communities by making sure that mining companies sign beneficial Community Development Agreements and ensures its implementation to the letter. Same support and oversight should be extended to the implementation of the provisions in the components of the PIA with regards to Host Communities.

Equally important, we call on the President, His Excellency President Bola Ahmed Tinubu to not appoint himself as the petroleum minister as we have seen in the past but to appoint a substantive petroleum minister with the required qualification and expertise, who should have proper oversight over the oil and gas industry.

Revamping Energy and Power:

The energy and power sector plays a vital role in driving economic growth and improving livelihoods. To address the challenges faced in this sector, we advocate for increased investments in renewable energy sources and the expansion of electricity access to underserved areas. It is crucial to implement policies that enhance efficiency, affordability, and reliability of energy services, thus fostering socio-economic development. The huge gas reserves, wind sources and natural waters should be harnessed for green energy

Enhancing Health and Education:

The CTA emphasises the importance of quality healthcare and education as fundamental rights, urging increased investment and equitable access, particularly in rural and disadvantaged communities. We welcome the passage of the Nigerian Education Bank Act by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, we encourage the implementation of this law by granting access to all eligible citizens, irrespective of gender, tribe, political or religious affiliations.

Security:

We commend the President for personally visiting security agencies especially the office of the National Security Adviser without prompting, the first of its kind. National security is a paramount concern that requires comprehensive strategies. We urge the government to prioritize intelligence gathering, effective law enforcement, and community engagement to restore peace and protect citizens. It is essential to foster a culture of respect for human rights, promote the rule of law, and ensure accountability in security operations.

The security challenges in the North East, Banditry and the Unknown Gun men menace in the South-East should be an utmost concern to both the federal and state governments.

Equally, the uncivility of some police officers while on check points against citizens leading to brutalization of citizens should be stopped. The era of subjecting young persons to police brutality in the name of unauthorized search of their phones and laptops including checking of tinted permits that has been stopped by the Inspector General of Police should be stopped by the government with strict instructions and consequences from the police high authorities.

Improving Human Capital and Communication:

The CTA stresses the need for investment in human capital development and the importance of transparent communication for effective citizen engagement and accountability.

In conclusion, the CTA remains committed to promoting good governance and transparency. We call for collaboration among citizens, civil society organisations, and the government to build a more prosperous Nigeria, staying true to the democratic ideals that Democracy Day celebrates.

Faith Nwadishi, JP

Executive Director

About Centre for Transparency Advocacy (CTA):

The Centre for Transparency Advocacy (CTA) is a non-governmental organization committed to promoting transparency, accountability, and good governance in Nigeria. With a mission to ensure that government actions and policies align with the principles of transparency and inclusivity, CTA actively engages in research, advocacy, and public engagement initiatives. By fostering dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders, CTA strives to create a transparent and accountable society where the benefits of development are shared equitably among all Nigerians. The Centre for Transparency Advocacy stands as a steadfast advocate for transparency, empowering citizens to hold their government accountable and fostering an environment where the interests of the Nigerian people are safeguarded and prioritized.

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