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African Anti-Corruption Day 2026: EFSCRJ Calls for Integrity, Accountability and Political Will in the Fight Against Corruption

Today, 11 July, Africa commemorates African Anti-Corruption Day, observed annually to mark the adoption of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC). This year's theme, *"Scaling Up the Promotion of Integrity and Anti-Corruption Actions Across Africa,"* calls on AU Member States, civil society organizations, the media, and citizens to strengthen and expand anti-corruption efforts by placing integrity at the centre of governance and public service.

As Africa marks this important day, the situation in the Gambia remains deeply concerning. Corruption is widespread, largely unchecked, and too often carried out with little or no consequence. The Edward Francis Small Centre for Rights and Justice notes that the Constitution, the Anti-Corruption Act, the Public Service Regulations, the General Orders, and numerous other laws, policies, and administrative instruments all uphold integrity, honesty, accountability, and ethical conduct as the foundation of public service. Yet these standards continue to be routinely violated through abuse of office, disregard for the rule of law, conflicts of interest, illicit self-enrichment, and the mismanagement of public resources.

Successive reports by the National Audit Office, the National Assembly, commissions of inquiry, police investigations, and other oversight bodies have consistently exposed serious cases of corruption and maladministration across public institutions. However, prosecutions and convictions remain rare, reflecting a persistent lack of political will to prevent, investigate, prosecute, and punish corruption. This culture of impunity continues to erode public confidence in state institutions and weakens democratic governance.

EFSCRJ is particularly concerned that three years after the enactment of the Anti-Corruption Act 2023, the Anti-Corruption Commission remains non-operational. More than six months have passed since the National Assembly approved nominees for the Commission, yet it has still not been established. One nominee was subsequently dropped following sustained public concern, including objections raised by EFSCRJ regarding the nominee's suitability. We also previously expressed concern over the lack of transparency surrounding the recruitment and selection process itself.

In light of these developments, EFSCRJ urges the Government to withdraw all remaining nominations and commence a fresh, transparent, merit-based, and consultative selection process. Such an approach will not only uphold the principles of transparency and accountability but will also inspire greater public confidence while strengthening the legitimacy, credibility, and independence of the Anti-Corruption Commission from its inception.

Furthermore, we call on the President to ensure the full implementation of the findings and recommendations contained in reports of the Auditor General, resolutions of the National Assembly, commissions of inquiry, and police investigations relating to corruption and abuse of office. Without decisive implementation and accountability, the fight against corruption will remain symbolic rather than substantive, allowing impunity to flourish and further entrenching corruption within public institutions.





Corruption is not merely an economic crime. It is a direct assault on human rights, democratic governance, sustainable development, and social justice. It diverts resources from healthcare, education, agriculture, infrastructure, and other essential public services while deepening poverty, inequality, and public distrust. As numerous international and African studies have demonstrated, corruption is also a major driver of instability, insecurity, and conflict.

On this African Anti-Corruption Day, EFSCRJ therefore calls on the Government, public officials, political leaders, civil society, the private sector, the media, and every citizen to recommit themselves to the values of integrity, transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. Only by confronting corruption with genuine political will and sustained collective action can the Gambia build a just, peaceful, democratic, and prosperous society.

2026 – The Year of Empowerment: Empowered Citizens. Accountable Leadership

