

STATEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION DAY

The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development joins the world in commemorating the International Anti-Corruption Day, reflecting on the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) adopted, ratified, and signed by 140 countries. It is the principal instrument for most nations including Zimbabwe giving guidance on the journey to fight graft. However, a contextual analysis of the situation prevailing in Zimbabwe paints a discouraging picture as graft continues to erode the economic, social, and political landscape. Forms of corruption vary from bribery, embezzlement, influence peddling, nepotism, and extortion, all leading to a failure to significantly improve on indicators such as the annual Corruptions Perceptions Index (CPI) by Transparency International which currently stands at 23 on a scale from 0 ("highly corrupt") to 100 ("very clean"). This demands a concerted effort to not only observe regional, local, and international instruments against corruption but to adopt them through concerted political will.

ZIMCodd notes and commends current national efforts under the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS). However, as a social and economic justice movement, ZIMCodd is concerned by the levels of corruption that continue to plague the country especially political corruption in offices of government. The use of political connections to avoid the consequences of arrests and prosecutions has become a pervasive ill, as exemplified by the catch-and-release phenomenon. The effects of this corruption are significant to the poor masses as witnessed through poor public service, poverty, lack of proper justice, increased unemployment, poor health and hygiene, low life expectancy, tender-premiership, decrease in investment confidence, unsustainable debt contraction, and weak social protection.

To improve good governance and the fight against corruption, ZIMCodd recommends the following:

- Strengthening of oversight institutions such as Parliament to overlook public deals and debt contraction.
- Arrest and prosecution of high public officials and breaking of the catch-and-release phenomenon.
- Politics-Administration dichotomy separation to ensure administrative arms operate without the influence of cartels or the political elite.
- Judiciary independence to ensure that those caught on the wrong side of the law are prosecuted.
- Whistle Blower Protection Legislation and mechanisms to encourage citizen surveillance.
- Strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks that ensure punitive measures.
- Adoption of e-governance systems that can track and expose corruption. Limiting human interface also reduces points where corruption can occur.