

PROSECUTE MULTI-NATIONALS WHO BRIBE GOVT OFFICIALS - PETER EIGEN
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THE Chairman of Transparency International, TI, Mr. Peter Eigen, on Monday called for the prosecution and blacklisting of multi-national companies found wanting in bribing government officials and decision-makers to influence their businesses.

He made the call when he called on the Senior Special Assistant to the President and Head of Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit, BMPIU, Dr. Mrs. Oby Ezekwesili, at the State House Abuja.

The chairman said that such actions demand some real important sanctions adding that for instance, in the case of Halliburton and other big companies that have been involved in or active here in Nigeria, we are very keen to make sure that the slightest violation of the law in Nigeria and the slightest attempt to bribe people is prosecuted also by the headquarters of these companies.

In Germany, we are looking forward to the conviction of a number of business people who have been brought to court. We hope that the same thing is going to happen in the United States and I will suggest this very much to you, to inform your judicial authorities in the home countries of these companies to make sure that not only do they face your laws and your system of protecting Nigerian people against corruption.

In Lesotho, they are doing very well in prosecuting Western companies and if this is supported and the companies are blacklisted, it becomes some real important sanctions, the Chairman stated.

Eigen revealed that Transparency International was giving more time to seeking ways on how to deal with the illegal and commercial system which favoured active bribery of Northern and Western companies in Africa, adding that the TI was supporting the creation of integrity in African countries where the problem of official corruption was more prevalent, even as he revealed that the IT had in December 1997 succeeded in making 35 exporting countries sign a convention outlawing bribery. He commended Nigeria for its anti corruption posture saying through strong policy advocacy, you, Nigeria, have been working on ending corruption.

You are now at the epic centre of the fight against corruption. It is not only for Nigeria or Africa. It is a global battle where economic development has been distorted, economic prosperity has been stalled", he noted. Mrs. Ezekwesili had said that the Federal Government would not relent in its anti-corruption crusade, especially in the area of public procurement stressing "our fight against corruption is to bring back sanity and good management of public funds in order to end corruption and tackle poverty