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## **PRESS RELEASE**

The attention of the Nigerian Judiciary has been drawn to the Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) in conjunction with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) titled **“Corruption in Nigeria; Bribery: public experience and response – 2017”**, alleging that the Judiciary is the second highest receiver of bribes in the Country.

The Judiciary finds the conclusion of the organizations not only subjective but speculative.

There is no denial of the fact that there are few bad eggs in the Judiciary, like in every other arm of Government; at the same time,

there are many honest and hardworking Judicial Officers and Magistrates making the Judiciary and the country proud.

The question that should agitate the minds of the people is the criteria used by the UNODC and the NBS to measure the level of bribe taking in the Judiciary to grade it as the second largest receiver of bribe. For instance, what is the percentage of Judges caught receiving bribe out of a total number of One Thousand and Fifty-Nine Judges in both the Federal and State Judiciaries?

What is the percentage of Magistrates caught taking bribe from an estimated total number of Four Thousand (4,000) in the country?

How many Judges or Magistrates have been arrested and/or prosecuted and convicted of corruption till date to deduce such conclusions?

One then wonders the criteria used by the organisations to arrive at the conclusion.

It should be noted that the Judiciary is the only arm of Government that has been investigating its Judicial Officers and dealt appropriately with those found guilty by dismissal or removal from office, subject to approval for such recommendation from the President or the Governor of a State as the case may be, and publish such in electronic and print media for the consumption of the public.

Members of the general public are also aware that the NJC has been recommending Judges found guilty of corrupt practices to the appropriate security agencies for prosecution.

It is unfortunate that this orchestrated allegation is coming at a time the current Chief Justice of Nigeria and Chairman of the National Judicial Council, Hon. Justice W.S.N. Onnoghen, GCON, is making frantic efforts to stamp out corruption, restructure the

Judiciary and also give the Nigerian Legal System a new lease of life for the Rule of Law to take its firm roots in the Country.

The Judiciary calls on the general public to disregard the aforestated allegation as it is untrue, baseless, unfounded and a figment of the Agencies' imagination. The National Judicial Council as usual calls on members of the public to forward written Petitions against any Judicial Officer found soliciting or receiving bribes or otherwise engaging in conducts unbecoming of a Judicial Officer to the National Judicial Council for appropriate action.

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