



POLITICAL ELITES BERATED FOR KILLING NIGERIA SLOWLY THROUGH UNBRIDLED CORRUPTION

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LAGOS STATE -

The perpetuation of corruption by the country's political elites has been described as the albatross in the development of the country as well as making life worth living for the majority of Nigerians. This assertion was made by the Emeritus Archbishop of Lagos, Anthony Cardinal Okogie, in a statement released to the press in Lagos, recently.

In the statement titled: *Corruption and Nigeria's Future*, Cardinal Okogie berated the country's political elites for the woes of the country, especially the perpetuation of corruption by public office holders and government officials noting that: "At this time, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible to differentiate between politics and criminality in Nigeria." He added: "Politics in Nigeria is divorced from morality. That is why we hear of huge sums of money getting into wrong hands. What we have is not politics of the

common good but politics of selfish interest. And its agent in every government are going scot-free.”

Cardinal Okogie noted that democracy is being assaulted by the country’s political leaders adding this attitude cannot continue without the country being destroyed. Pointing out that there is no wisdom spending so much money on political office holders who are not working for the interest of the people. Pointing out that that the country’s wealth should have been judiciously utilized for the interest of the common good of majority of Nigerians, The Cardinal regretted that: “We have witnessed successive regimes of politicians in military and civilian garbs who enrich themselves by impoverishing the people.”

Pointing out that the people are deprived of all the essential necessities of life while members of the political oligarchy live extravagantly, Cardinal Okogie declared: “The beautiful country that God gave us is raped and robbed with impunity by those who should be working for the common good. The future of Nigeria is jeopardized in the present by politicians who show symptoms of kleptomania, an irresistible tendency to

take what belong to all of us. Many of our leaders are getting away with daylight robbery and murder.

Warning that Nigeria is a sinking ship being navigated by pirates, the cardinal stressed the need to rescue the country from the hands of brigands, to prevent violence and bloodshed. The panacea he offered to redeem the country include: urgent need to restructure government in Nigeria, including change of the nation's constitution which according to him provides: "a recipe and a license for theft in government, for poverty of the populace and for insecurity in the land."

Other solutions proposed by the cardinal include: drastic reduction in the size of government, replacing the present bicameral legislative house of 109 senators and 375 House of Representative Members with one Federal Parliament and curtailing the habit of cross carpeting by politicians.