



THE LAUNCH OF THE CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SECTOR GOVERNANCE
AND THE INAUGURAL CONFERENCE ON THE THEME:

**"STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS
FOR PUBLIC SECTOR INSTITUTIONS"**

HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2024,
AT THE TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA

INTRODUCTION

The Centre for Public Sector Governance ("the Centre" or "CPSG"), an initiative of the Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria (SCGN) set up to promote corporate governance in the public sector, officially launched its operations on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at the Transcorp Hilton Hotel, Abuja.



To commemorate the launch of its operations, the Centre held an inaugural conference on the theme "Strengthening Leadership and Ethics for Public Sector Institutions". The event featured prominent stakeholders and leaders in public governance who engaged in enriching discussions. The Chairman of the Advisory Board, Dr Ernest Ndukwe, OFR, gave the welcome remarks at the conference and highlighted the Centre's mission of empowering public sector institutions to create sustainable value. He highlighted that the Centre aims to ensure accountability, transparency, and service delivery in public institutions.

Professor Fabian Ajogwu, OFR, SAN, a member of the Advisory Board, in his opening remarks, highlighted the rationale behind establishing the Centre. He noted that the Centre aims to enhance public sector performance by strengthening service, building institutional trust, and promoting accountability. The Centre seeks to drive transparency and effective governance, particularly within state-owned enterprises and ministries, by fostering cross-sector partnerships and promoting best practices.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSIONS

The Conference comprised four sessions: the guest speaker's address, the keynote address, the panel discussion, and the official unveiling of the Centre.

Guest Speaker's Address by Mr. George Akume on Strengthening Leadership and Ethics for Public Sector



Mr. George Akume, representing Mr. Olusegun Adeyemi Adekunle, the former Chairman of the Board of Nigerian Extractive Industries and Transparency Initiative (NEITI), gave the guest speaker's address. The following are key points from his speech:

- ▶ **Prioritise Service Above Self:** Leaders must reaffirm their dedication to serving others selflessly. This entails making decisions rooted in the public good, even when such decisions may not bring immediate personal or political benefits.
- ▶ **Strengthen Ethics through Timely and Effective Service Delivery:** Public servants should prioritise the timely and efficient execution of their responsibilities, ensuring that service delivery aligns with the best interests of the public and upholds institutional trust.
- ▶ **Champion Accountability through Self-Regulation:** Public servants should champion a culture of personal accountability, where honour dictates that actions and decisions are guided by the highest standards of ethics, independent of external monitoring or enforcement.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSIONS

Guest Speaker's Address by Dr. Machiavelli Obi on Strengthening Leadership and Ethics for Public Sector Institutions

Dr Machiavelli Obi, representing the Head of the Civil Service, Mrs Didi Esther Walson–Jack, delivered the second guest speaker's address. The following are key points from his speech:

- ▶ **Leadership as a Lifelong Journey:** Recommitment to leadership should be seen as an ongoing process of growth, reflection, and adaptation. Leaders must continually refine their skills, align with ethical principles, and remain responsive to evolving societal needs.
- ▶ **Foster a Culture of Accountability:** True leadership involves being accountable to those you serve. Leaders must consistently evaluate their impact, admit shortcomings, and take corrective action when necessary to maintain the trust of their stakeholders.
- ▶ **Lead with Inclusivity and Empathy:** Recommitting to leadership involves embracing diversity and inclusivity, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued. Leaders must demonstrate empathy and an understanding of the needs and aspirations of the people they serve.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSIONS

Keynote Speech by Professor Adetunji Olaopa on Strengthening Leadership and Ethics for Public Sector Institutions



Professor Adetunji Olaopa, the Chairman of the Federal Civil Service Commission, gave the keynote address. The following are the key points from his address.

- ▶ Honour as the Bedrock of Ethical Leadership: Public officials should embrace the principle of honour in service delivery. This principle entails a commitment to ethical conduct, integrity, and excellence in discharging their duties, regardless of personal disagreements with policy choices.
- ▶ Foster Selflessness in Public Service: Public service requires officials to act without expectation of personal gain or recognition. Institutions should celebrate selfless dedication to the public good as a standard of ethical behaviour.
- ▶ Develop frameworks to establish ethical leadership: Systems that reward honourable and ethical conduct in public service should be implemented, thereby encouraging others to adopt similar standards of leadership.
- ▶ Embrace Service-Oriented Leadership as a Legacy: Leadership should be viewed as a legacy-building exercise, with a focus on creating long-term value rather than pursuing short-term benefits
- ▶ Lead with Inclusivity and Empathy: Recommitting to leadership involves embracing diversity and inclusivity, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued. Leaders must demonstrate empathy and an understanding of the needs and aspirations of the people they serve.

THE PANEL SESSION



The distinguished panelists for the panel discussion on "Strengthening Leadership and Ethics for Public Sector Institutions" were Mr Muhammad K. Ahmad, OON, the President of the Society for Corporate Governance Nigeria (SCGN), Mrs Funmi Illamah, Managing Partner, Management Strategy Advisory Limited, Dr. Armstrong Takang, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Ministry of Finance Incorporated (MOFI), Dr Dasuki Arabi, Director General, Bureau of Public Service Reforms (BPSR), and Ms Ayotola Jagun, Chief Compliance Officer and Company Secretary of Oando Plc. Mrs Uto Ukpanah, Company Secretary, MTN Nigeria, moderated the session. The following are the key points from the panel session as follows:

THE PANEL SESSION

- ▶ Institutionalise Ethics as the foundation of governance: Public officials must prioritise the establishment of ethical frameworks that drive decision-making, policy implementation and service delivery, ensuring accountability and transparency at every level.
- ▶ Foster synergy between public and corporate governance: Corporate governance is an integral part of societal development, and principles such as accountability, fairness, and sustainability serve as benchmarks for public sector governance.
- ▶ Reinforce Commitment to Service as the Core of Leadership: Public servants should embrace a service-oriented mindset, prioritising citizens' needs and ensuring that governance focuses on the common good over personal or political interests.
- ▶ Embed Fiduciary Responsibilities in Public Trust Management: Public sector leaders must view their roles as fiduciaries of public trust, managing resources and authority with integrity and aligning their actions with the expectations of accountability and stewardship.
- ▶ Lead by Example: "Walk the Talk": Ethical leadership requires consistency between words and actions. Public officials must exemplify the principles they advocate, reinforcing trust and credibility within their institutions.

OFFICIAL UNVEILING OF THE CENTRE AND PRESENTATION OF THE CENTRE'S UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES



The Chairman of the Advisory Board, Dr Ernest Ndukwe, OFR, alongside esteemed members of the Advisory Board, formally unveiled the Centre, signifying the Centre's official launch of its activities. This momentous occasion marked the beginning of the Centre's mission to champion excellence in public sector leadership and governance.

Ms. Rabi Isma, a member of the Advisory Board, presented the Centre's upcoming programs and initiatives. She noted that these programs aim to establish the centre as a beacon of excellence in governance and ethical leadership, fostering a culture of integrity and effectiveness within public sector institutions. She expressed the hope of the Advisory Board that these programs and initiatives of the Centre would effectively address the pressing challenges confronting the public sector. Some of the programs and initiatives of the Centre include:

- ▶ Establishing robust frameworks for public sector institutions.
- ▶ Advocating accountability and transparency initiatives
- ▶ Organising capacity-building workshops
- ▶ Developing performance metrics for benchmarking governance practices
- ▶ Organising annual public governance summits

CONCLUSION

The official launch of the Centre for Public Sector Governance and its inaugural conference has laid a foundation for advancing leadership and ethical governance in public institutions. The deliberations and insights shared during the event underscore the urgent need to institutionalise ethics, promote accountability, and reinforce a commitment to service in the public sector.

Photo Speaks



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Photo Speaks

