

Speech by the Executive Secretary of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Dr. Orji Ogbonnaya Orji, at the United Nations International Anti-Corruption Day 2023 on December 8, 2023, at the Shehu Musa Yar'adua Centre, Abuja.

1. Protocols!
2. I feel privileged to speak today as we mark the 20th anniversary of the United Nations International Anti-Corruption Day for the year 2023.
3. I would like to thank all our fellow partners, Agencies under the Inter-Agency Task Team (IATT), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Development Partners, diplomatic missions in Nigeria, all civil society organizations, anti-corruption champions in government at all levels in Nigeria and our colleagues in the media. We thank the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), MacArthur Foundation, and the Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption programme for bringing together experts, including government, private sector, and international organisations to discuss Nigeria's implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC).
4. 20 years after Nigeria adopted the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), notable efforts have been made, no doubt. However, the latest Corruption Perception Index ranking of Nigeria of 154 out of 180 countries clearly shows that our country is still far behind from the destination in its fight against corruption.
5. In the oil, gas and mining sectors and extractive industries generally, corruption is still a major constraint to the realisation of the impacts of the ground breaking reforms recommended in NEITI's series of industry reports. In this sector, Nigeria is still perhaps the only resource rich country confronted with the peculiar challenges of oil theft, pipeline vandalism, illegal mining and daylight stealing of our solid minerals, painfully by foreigners with the collusion of our own citizens.
6. On oil theft alone Nigeria lost over 619million barrels of crude, valued at US\$46.16billion or N16.25 trillion Naira between 2009 and 2020. In addition, Nigeria lost 4.2 billion litres of petroleum products from refineries, valued at

US\$1.84 billion at the rate of One Hundred and Forty Thousand Barrels per day, from 2009 to 2018.

7. Pipelines, a critical national assets were also vandalized as NEITI also disclosed in its reports. In the past 5 years, 2017 to 2021, Nigeria recorded 7,143 cases of pipeline breakages and deliberate vandalism resulting in crude theft and product losses of 208.639 million barrels valued at \$12.74 million or N4.325 trillion. NEITI Reports also disclosed that during the same period Nigeria spent over N471. 493 billion to either repair or maintain these pipelines.
8. The motive behind all these are simply to get wealthy without legitimate work.
9. We therefore need to review our commitments and approach to the war against corruption. Our new approach requires closer partnerships, collaboration in sharing of information and data, human capital development, inter agency cooperation. In this direction.
10. The time has come for us to convene a special workshop to review the objectives and goals of the IATT. The review will require a SWOT analysis of what has worked and what has not over these years and a new approach devised, including the opportunities to open our doors to new members.
11. Ladies and gentlemen, this year's theme, "UNCAC at 20: Uniting the World Against Corruption aligns with the new focus of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, which NEITI implements in Nigeria. While we remain committed to the promotion of accountability in the extractives sector through regular disclosures of information and data, our goal can be made easier if we unite more closely, work with more partners especially at this time when NEITI's focus is on using our reports to incentivize revenue generation from the sector and optimize deployment of transparent mechanisms to ensure responsible utilisation for the benefit of all citizens.
12. Shining the light on transactions and operations in Nigeria's oil, gas and mining sectors is NEITI's contribution to the fight against corruption. We provide information and data that stimulates discussions and debates on how the sectors are being governed.

13. Most importantly, the information and data we provide helps to drive reforms and policy options for our countries extractive sector from where we derive about half of the revenues that are deployed to provide for our citizens.
14. Through years of extensive independent reports under the global EITI, NEITI's reports have led to reforms in the extractive sector, revenue recovery, mobilisation and growth to the tune of over \$7.2b through inter-agency collaboration, as well as verifiable and credible public awareness of the extractive industry's financial flows.
15. The EITI/NEITI process complements government's efforts at improving transparency in mineral resource governance, establishes and sustains robust systems of accountability and opens dialogue for reforms and policy changes.
16. Ladies and gentlemen, let me use this opportunity to inform you that Nigeria scaled through its global assessment by the EITI. The global body acknowledged and endorsed NEITI's report to be credible.
17. The Country was assessed on three components of outcomes and impacts, transparency and stakeholders' engagement.
18. The score of 92 points recorded in the outcomes and impacts component reflects what the global EITI calls NEITI's robust system for developing workplans for implementation, monitoring and evaluation, dissemination, and outreach.
19. Nigeria also recorded its highest score of 90 points on data integrity, comprehensiveness of report, contribution to economic growth, and adherence to legal frameworks, a pointer to the enormous and painstaking efforts undertaken in generating the information and data contained in NEITI's industry reports.
20. In the words of the EITI on Nigeria's global assessment, "Nigeria EITI has had visible and tangible impacts on extractive industry governance in Nigeria. The global Board commends NEITI for continuing to publish data in open format and continuing to grow in its role as a reliable annual source of data on government revenues from the extractive industries, including through more regular reporting on subnational extractive revenue flows".

21. NEITI has also presented the result of Nigeria's outcome on the recent global assessment to the Federal Government. The Secretary to the Government of the Federation Senator George Akume, while receiving the report, reaffirmed government's commitment to the implementation of the EITI in Nigeria. The SGF also pledged government's commitment to implement the observations of the EITI, including the urgent steps being taken to reconstitute the National Stakeholders' Working Group for the good governance of the country's oil, gas and mining sectors.
22. However, while NEITI's reports pointed out areas requiring greater transparency and accountability, systemic changes driven by political commitments are essential to curbing corruption in the long term. I believe this event has a responsibility to commence this national dialogue required to guide and shape the direction of implementation.
23. Furthermore, the 2023 EITI Standards unveiled during the Dakar EITI Global Conference has anti-corruption as one of its focus for intervention among member countries. This has created opportunities for countries to use the EITI platform to identify and address corruption risks and governance issues in the natural resource sector.
24. As a member of the Inter-Agency Task Team, NEITI believes collaborations and partnerships between stakeholders present here today can create innovative yet efficient and sustainable ways to proffer solutions to address the corruption issues plaguing the country.
25. Thus, NEITI is committed to supporting the fight against corruption through sharing of credible information and data to ensure that corruption is minimized if not eliminated, in the governance of Nigeria's extractive sector and recommend the EITI model of multi-stakeholders' consensus building and oversight as option to implant accountability mechanisms in our governance institutions.
26. On this note, I call on the stakeholders gathered here today to have a robust discussion on issues that will center on promoting transparency and strengthening accountability institutions to sustain peace, security, and overall development of our country.
27. I wish you all a very fruitful deliberation.