Title: ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN GOVERNANCE: FORENSIC ACCOUNTING AS THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract: Lack of accountability, unethical behaviour and corrupt practices have become so pervasive and even institutionalized in African nations such as Nigeria. These practices have had untold negative impact on productivity; the responsiveness, legitimacy and transparency of governments; the effective implementation of policies; and efforts to bring about recovery and development in general in Nigeria. The enforcement of ethical values is the starting point for good governance and accountability. Nigeria has recorded some landmark progress in the war against corruption by making a declaration towards commitment to institutional credibility, integrity and transparency in conduct of government businesses. This paper explores the fact that never before has so much premium been placed on the expertise and integrity of the accountants by society and the business community in ensuring fair resource management, security of assets, ethical best practices and good governance by enunciating the contributions of forensic accounting in this direction. It concludes that the way out of the quagmire of unethical and unaccountable practices in governance is a focused and intense engagement of forensic accountants/auditors in the polity.