Title of Article: Political Corruption and National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper argued that the emergence of democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa is rooted in socioeconomic grievances and demand for better standards of living expressed by the people against obnoxious regimes- colonialism, military or civilian. The author contends that the form of economic system, internal misrule, the complicity of western governments, development donors and creditors (IMF and World Bank) have influenced the process of democratization and governance in particular directions in Africa with serious implications for overall development in the continent. As such, it is not a mere wishes to note that the popular demand for political change in many African countries appear to have much to do with widespread and profound dissatisfaction with deteriorating economic conditions driven by massive political corruption and bad leadership as with deep commitment to democratic values and principles. Thus, since 1999, the expectation of the people of Nigeria that they would enjoy the dividends of democracy with the return to civilian administration is far from being realized. This is particularly so given the highjack of the processes of political competition and elections by the elite and the middle class who exploit it for their selfish benefits rather than for economic redistribution given the unequal nature of the society. This realism explains the fact that twelve years into civilian rule, massive corruption, absence of political openness, transparency, accountability, electoral rigging, god-fatherism holds sway in the polity at all levels, while basic services are eroded coupled with huge poverty and inequality. Be that at it may, the Nigeria’s political system presently reward rather than punish corruption despite the setting up of anti-graft agencies as seen in the state of institutional and moral decay in the nation. The paper interrogates the subject of political corruption in Nigeria through the prism of clientelism, prebendalism and patrimonialism, which provides the theoretical framework for understanding the band of continuing underdevelopment in the Nigerian nation and by extension Africa. The paper concludes that political corruption will be fought headlong when we create political structures where the economic and political rights of the people are justiceable; create an environment where the citizenry can define the kind and type of political change they really desire rather than the one that are foist on them.

• Keywords: Political Corruption, Welfare, Economic Rights and Development.