Protocols
Standing on all existing protocols.

Preamble

John Newman in 1858 in response to question he posed on the subject matter – “What is a University?”, in his book ‘The idea of a University’ referred to a University as “a place where inquiry is pushed forward and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is the place where professor become eloquent, and is a missionary and a preacher, displaying his science in its most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers...It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation.”

Noting the role that Universities must serve in mapping out continued relevance, our visionary base as Covenant University must continue to serve as a thrust for pushing continuous relevance in order to advance platforms for securing continuous results. Our commitment to raising a new generation of Leaders places a continuous demand on us to strive continuously to take the lead in breaking new grounds – in Teaching, Learning, Research, Product Development, Administration, Impacting the immediate and external context, via our solution driven approaches channeled though our Community Development Impact Initiatives etc.

Now to Our Subject.

Dinosaurs (from the Greek word deinos-"terrible, powerful, wondrous") are a kind of animal that lived thousands of years ago but are now extinct or no longer exist. There were over 9,000 species of this animal referred to as dominant terrestrial vertebrates several years ago until they became extinct. Although there are several extinction theories on dinosaurs, one certain thing is that at a point in time all dinosaurs died. They ATE themselves up and they have become history. I was out to the nation of Israel some years
ago and out of curiosity, I asked for some prominent tribes in Bible history and the response was, they are extinct. In the same vein, a number of tribes and peoples that featured prominently in the medieval history have also become extinct.

The Nigeria Nation and the black race at large like the dinosaur seems to be speedily running down the cliff of extinction through a self-destruct syndrome being fueled by the cultism of corruption; I have called it cultism because it is an hideous movement. Everybody pretends as if it does not exist whereas it all around us. This in my understanding is an hypothesis gaining wide validity.

Although corruption is not peculiar to any nation, its magnitude however varies from country to country, organization to organization and person to person. The deep intensive and unabated corruption rot in Nigeria is eating us deep to extinction the way of the dinosaurs but God forbid.

Corruption is variously defined:

- It involves an effort to secure wealth and power through wrong means.
- It is a transaction between two or more persons that leads to a misapplication of resources with devastating consequences on public good.
- Generally it involves perversion, wrong, abuse, or misuse of power, influence or position to secure group, personal or narrow financial or other interest expressed through bribery fraud extortion, exaction or subtle compulsion to secure undue gain.

On another occasion I was caught up in a conversation ‘Crossfire’ as I sat between two frontline politicians in one of the prominent African Nation at a particular forum. The superior leader asserted “ours is a wasted generation” but the counterpart objected to this assertion “No Sir” but the former insisted “I say ours is a wasted generation”. At this point I nodded my head in agreement saying, “true, yours has been a wasted generation because there is not much to show if at all for the annual budget of billions of dollars over the years”. Therefore, if waste can be defined among others as lack of appropriate value for money spent, then a lot of public spendings in our nation are merely squandered with no proof on ground to show. I believe this is one of the greatest threats to the survival of our great nation. This is why we at Covenant University have placed a strong emphasis on
character requirement for graduation thereby producing graduates who are worthy both in learning and character. It is from this understanding of the critical role of character in fulfilling destiny that I present this striking data that shows our global rating as a Nation.

In one of the Covenant University Public Lecture series (Ike, D.N. 2009) Professor Don Ike did some extensive search on some existing record on corruption exhibited in our public service. Among which were the following:

i. It is estimated that by 1999 past Nigerian leaders have stolen or misused $407 billion or 225 billion pounds. This amounted to a sum equal to all western aid to the continent of Africa (Financial Times London, June 1999).

ii. The immediate former chairman of Nigeria Economic, and Financial Crimes Commission disclosed that 220 billion pounds was squandered between independence from Britain in 1960 and the return to democracy in 1999. “We cannot be accurate down to the last kobo but that is our own projection” his spokesman said. (The stolen fortune tallies exactly with the 220 billion pounds of Western Aid given to Africa between 1960-1997. That amounted to six times the American help given to post war Europe under the Marshall plan for reconstruction of Europe)

iii. In 1999, the World Bank compiled a list of Nigeria’s fund by depositors in four Western countries and submitted to the then President of Nigeria. From that list we were told that five of the depositors alone were responsible for much of the stolen funds in the World Bank list of 21 heavy looters.

iv. The total of amount deposited in western banks by the heaviest 21 looters is the equivalent of 150 billion dollars. Therefore on balance one can say that the leaders of the first and second republics were relatively not corrupt, however corruption has progressively worsened over time since then.

It is unfortunate that after 50 years of independence, the forlorn hope of the innocent citizens of this country is far from being realized. The hopes of freedom that brought smiles and celebration at independence in 1960 have largely been substituted, with gloom, pessimism and despondency.

It is quite instructive to recall that in comparison with other countries in the same league with us in the 1960s, Nigeria remains perhaps the only one that had failed to achieve its full potentials. Countries like Malaysia, South Korea and many of the Tiger nations of Asia have all left us behind even though we had much more potential than most of them in
1960. Even a city state like Singapore has transformed into a first world status in under thirty years from being a third world country. And now a country like Ghana is also leaving us behind.

ONE WRONG STEP – MANY REGRETS

We unfortunately neglected agriculture as a result of the discovery of crude oil and the subsequent boom that followed. In 1960, Nigeria was near self sufficiency in food, as agriculture accounted for 97% of export earnings. The per capita GNP then and now have not really changed. From 1965-1975 the nation’s annual revenue witnessed dramatic increase, from $295 million to $2.5 billion with oil accounting for Nigeria’s thirtieth richest country status. One immediate effect of this was the unfortunate neglect of agriculture. From 1970 -1982 , production of groundnuts fell by 64%,cocoa43% ,rubber 29% and cotton by 65%

With such enormous resources, we had all the opportunity to develop our infrastructures but our leaders chose rather to sell the future of the entire nation to selfishness on the altar of corruption. Wasteful spending and extreme corrupt practices cost us and is still costing us a loss of identity and by that the abortion of the destiny of a great nation. This experience has clearly marked us out for extinction in terms of our placement or relevance in the comity of nations. We curiously abandoned or shamelessly frittered scarce resources that would have been engaged in developing critical infrastructure, especially power, energy, transportation, roads and housing. Today, the absence of these infrastructures has become an albatross on our development.

What more? we caught cheaply the “Dutch Disease” (a global acronym for nations whose rich natural resource endowment paralyze their production potentials turning them paradoxically to poor underdeveloped nations because they lost the motivation, discipline and capacity for self-development, self reliance and sustainable growth. Examples are Iran, Iraq, Venezuela, Libya Saudi Arabia) But it does not have to be so. Norway had a similar experience it did not allow her oil and gas resources go the way of Netherland which was the origin of the Dutch disease economic proverb. The New York Times made the following comments in its edition of 1st August 2000

“if oil revenue is managed well, it can educate, heal and provide jobs for the people. But oil brings risks as well as benefits. Rarely have developing countries used oil money to improve the lives of the majority of citizens or bring steady economic
growth. More often oil revenues have caused crippling economic distortions and been spent on showy projects, weapons and Paris shopping trips for government officials”.

I believe that one of the reasons why corruption had thrived is because we neglected our true potentials and endowments to go after the raw money from raw crude. We neglected our greatest resource in agriculture and turned a great nation into a beggar nation. We refused to adapt to change and we embraced an uncommon form of corruption that makes us to eat up ourselves without any concern for fellow citizens and now we are moving straight to not only destruction but also extinction. God forbid!

Just this week precisely on Tuesday July 19th, the new Minister of Agriculture and Rural development Dr Akinwumi Adesina in a report in the “The Nation” made the following startling disclosure at his inaugural meeting with officials of the ministry in Abuja:

"Nigeria is now one of the largest food importers in the world. The food import bill of Nigeria in 2007 – 2010 was N98 trillion or $628 billion. In 2010 alone, Nigeria spent N635billion on import of wheat, N356billion on importation of rice (that means we spend N1billion per day on rice alone), N217billion on sugar imports and with all the marine resources, rivers, lakes and creeks we are blessed with, Nigeria spends N97billion importing fish.

He regretted the position of agriculture in the country, stressing that Nigeria, which used to be the major player in agriculture world over has lost its place in the global community. He said Nigeria was a major contributor of cocoa, palm oil, groundnut, groundnut oil and other major cash crops before it diverted to the oil sector. "In the 1960s, we had glory. That glory was visible for all to see. Nigeria accounted for 60 per cent of the global supply of palm oil, 30 per cent of groundnut, 20 - 30 per cent of groundnut oil and 15 per cent supply of cocoa. Our farmers, from the north to south generated wealth,"

While citing rice farmers as example, the Minister said dependence on food importation in the country undermines domestic productions as well as create fiscal challenges for the economy. "There is a problem: fiscally this is not sustainable. Nigeria is eating beyond its means while we smile as we eat rice every day, Nigerian rice farmers cry as the imports undermine domestic production."This must stop. We must accelerate domestic rice production and improve on processing to meet quality standards. We must tap into all the resources of our farmers across our nation and deliver a green revolution for rice that will make Nigeria self-sufficient in rice production,"

The minister went ahead to make promises of reversal as expected.

We at Covenant University join in his optimism and we pray for commitment and political will to drive it. This is the reason for the proprietors of Covenant University to have birthed a second university – Landmark University whose mission is to drive an agrarian revolution by promoting agricultural enterprise in the nation.
Today Landmark University is home to students from 8 other nations of Africa which includes Ghana, Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, Tunisia, Togo, Benin Republic and Cameroun with about 1000 students in her pioneering year. Every faculty staff and student of Landmark University is allocated a farm plot in collaboration with the university. The university flagged off this revolution.

**ENDEMIC CORRUPTION REMAINS AN ISSUE OF CONCERN**
A number of our leaders have become like the biblical Achan that brought a temporary defeat to Israel while they confronted the little city of Ai but not without paying the capital price ultimately, that is, Achan and his household were destroyed while the nation regained her victory – Zech 5:4, Josh7:10-26

Today W.H.O. rates life expectancy in Africa at 47 (and in Nigeria 44) against the case of Malaysia’s 74 which got independence at same time as Nigeria. This is one example of the devastating effect of corruption for a nation by her leaders who squandered the resources that should have provided food and health for her people. The life expectancy figure as indicated here practically validates biblical verdict on ill gotten wealth. “As the partridge sitteth on eggs and hatchet them not; so he that getteth riches and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days and at the end shall be a fool.” Jer 17:11

Furthermore, a crave for free money has eroded our national values and virtues and this has become to us like a cancerous infection on the entire society. For instance, how can a nation among the poorest in the world run the most expensive democracy? As widely circulated last year, a member of the National Assembly earning more than the President of USA! A Nigeria senator earns at least 8 times as much as an American senator and more than 3 times the American president (Nigerian Elite Forum, 25th June, 2010 - www.nigerianelitesforum.com/ng). What a wasteful generation!

Also in another public lecture at Covenant University captioned, “The accounting Profession, the Church and the Nigerian State” (Emeyonu E. 2007) Professor E. Emeyonu stated inter alia “Corruption is a universal human problem as it exists in every country of the world. However, there are countries where corruption is so pervasive that it makes impossible any effort at progress. Unfortunately, Nigeria is one such country. Corruption has eaten so deep into the fabric of Nigeria society that there is hardly any segment of Nigeria that is free from the ugly effects of corruption”.

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He went on to extract from a statement from a communiqué sent by Christian Association of Nigeria at the end of its 6th National Assembly which summarizes the problem of corruption in Nigeria, thus:

“Corruption today is still a deadly disease in Nigeria. Corruption has been responsible for the collapse of our economy, the infrastructure and the collapse of education and health sectors and other areas of life. Many Nigerians are yet to be free from it. Where is corruption not present in Nigerian society? Is it in the Executive Arm of our Government, the Legislature- the Senate, house of Representatives, the Judiciary-courts, the Uniformed establishment- Military, Police, Immigration Services, Customs, the Prison, the Civil and administrative Services, the Education (School and Colleges) and Health Sectors and Private Sectors and Mercantile House, where? Unless we want to deceive ourselves, the whole nation is sick. Our road are bad because of it, armed robbers, smugglers are everywhere by the grace of corruption. The church and all Nigerian must decide to eradicate corruption in Nigeria at all cost. But first the physician must be alive to their responsibilities to her people.”

He further disclosed that the above CAN statement got strong empirical support from a World Bank survey on the level of corruption in selected agencies and institutions in Nigeria’s both, public and private sectors, religions and Non-Governmental Organizations. The survey for 2006 shows for instance that on a scale 1 to 5, with 5 representing extreme or total corruption, government departments and agencies led by the Nigerian Police Force was ranked the most corrupt with a score of 4.9. Furthermore, it is disheartening to note that for 2006, none of the organizations included in the survey had score of less than 3.0, even for Religious Bodies.

### Assessment of levels of Corruption in Nigerian Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Year 2004</th>
<th>Year 2005</th>
<th>Year 2006</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political Parties</td>
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<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Legislatures</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Revenue</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customs</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Registry and Licensing</td>
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<td>3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilites (PHCN,etc)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
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<td>1997</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>152 out of 158</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>150 out of 163</td>
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Table 1 (Source: Compiled by author from World Bank Governance and Integrity Study 2004)

Also indicting evidence of the extent of corruption in Nigeria comes from the Berlin, Germany based organization, Transparency International (TI) which has been conducting annual rankings of the perception of the level of corruption in the different nations of the world since 1995. As from 1996 when TI started including Nigeria in those rankings, she has always emerged as one of the most perceived corrupt nations on the face of the earth (see Table Below)

Table 2: Compiled by the author from the Annual Corruption Perception Index prepared by Transparency International.

Out of Eleven years, Nigeria has ranked last three times (1996, 1997 and 2000), she has ranked second to the last four times (1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003). There is hardly any other country that has performed as bad so consistently.
Successive Nigerian governments have attempted to confront the corruption issue with minimal or no progress.

But there is a way out.

**Taking Steps to Stop the Scourge of Corruption**

It was Francis Bacon that said “*He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils for time is the greatest innovator*”. Ordinarily the overwhelming display of corruption in every place, the torment and misfortune that the corruption monster had become in this nation will probably discourage an attempt to confront it. However, reminding ourselves that the future comes one day at a time should give us the courage to look away from the staring despair and do some exploit in hope. If we have found ourselves boxed in to destruction and extinction, there is profit organizing a change before we experience the change. Though the causes of corruption are myriad and have deep economic, political and cultural roots in Nigeria, if there is political will, we can find the jugular veins that supply the life lines of corruption, block them and save the nation from corporate destruction Apart from ensuring availability of food at low prices, there is also need to reduce the wide inequality in income distribution, It is in the light of the above that I make the following suggestions in fighting on the war against corruption.

1. The President and the national assembly should declare an emergency in the fight against corruption. An institutional stand of this nature will help to keep them accountable and will help their individual and corporate resolve to combat the scourge of corruption since corruption monitors made it very clear that government institutions and the political organizations are the fountain and bedrock of corruption.

2. Governments of the federation should make an open declaration of accountability and with passage of the Freedom of Information Bill provide institutional support to those who may seek information to expose or prosecute corrupt officials. In the same light, the FGN should make available on a well publicized website, summary information on revenue allocation, contracts award and major purchase of materials and equipment.

3. Next to encouraging and fortifying the existing anti corruption agencies, there is a need to revisit all legal frameworks that now constitute clogs to eliminating impunity in corrupt practices. The Judiciary should, especially, be assisted to make justice faster and exclude technical delay and challenges that tend to lead to denial of justice for corrupt official.

4. As part of serving as deterrence, it may be necessary to look at some of the reports of corruption particularly from the international platform and especially those that were push into the press a few years back like the world Bank report on the 21 major looters of Nigerian treasury. Government should confirm the report and take steps to recover the funds.

5. A major corruption vein to block is the conception of governance responsibility by those elected into position of authority. A nomenclatural and legislative ambience that does not make those in authority responsible to the people who elected them is not helpful.

6. Government must rise up to a more responsible management of our natural resources. Norway did not go the way of Netherlands by wise investment of her oil and gas resources it worked hard to
match every dollar of oil exports by other manufactured product through wise investment of the natural resource proceeds. It is important to have some places to look up to in our bid for recovery.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion public accountability and transparency has proved to be a global certified system for combating corruption. As it’s often been said, power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Most elected public officers operate consciously or unconsciously with absolute power mentality that is, answerable to no one, challengeable by no man and accountable to no one.

In today’s Nigeria, the masses are more like political captives while the elected officers are their ‘lucky’ captors who joyfully prey on their captives. But there can be no true development or lasting democracy without public accountability. And until we institute public accountability system to checkmate elected/public office holders we shall continue to bemoan the scourge of corruption. Therefore let the senators return periodically to their senatorial districts, and let the representatives in the lower house all get back to their territories from time to time to give account of their stewardship to the people they represent.

Let the state governors become accountable to the men and women of their state, updating stakeholders in their states reasoning with them and answering their questions.

We cannot claim to be democratic without public accountability and transparency. After all, democracy is all about government of the people by the people and for the people.

May I conclude with the following: the fight against corruption is a winnable fight; the war against corruption is a conquerable war. We must not despair. All we need is a commitment and our victory is sure. Nigeria shall not become extinct. Our potentials will be recovered and our dignity shall be restored. This is why we offer the kind of education we provide in Covenant University.

Finally to the graduating class, go forth and live the Covenant University Vision running with our seven (7) core values and making a difference. Remember, a good name is better than silver and gold. Nothing preserves like integrity and nothing dignifies like probity. If you join them, you can’t bit them, if you refuse to stand for the right you are sure to fall for the wrong. As it is often said, if you don’t stand for something, you will fall for anything. Capacity may take anyone up, only character can keep him there.

See you at the top in flying colours until your old age.

Long live Covenant University.


Thank you all and God bless you all.