

**GOODWILL MESSAGE DELIVERED BY THE SECRETARY TO THE
GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERATION (SGF) AT THE OPENING SESSION
OF THE ROUNDTABLE OF THE AU CHAMPION ON ANTI-CORRUPTION
HELD ON 11TH JULY, 2018,
AT THE ROCKVIEW ROYALE HOTEL, WUSE II, ABUJA:**

**THEME: ENHANCING DOMESTIC RESOURCES FOR SDG BY IMPROVED
ASSET RECOVERY AND ASSET RETURN.**

PROTOCOLS:

I am indeed highly honoured to deliver this “Goodwill Message” on the occasion of the Roundtable of the AU Champion on Anti-corruption with the theme: **“Enhancing Domestic Resources for SDG by Improved Asset Recovery and Asset Return”**. It is my strong belief that this Roundtable will provide the platform for the exchange of robust ideas that would lead to enhancing domestic resources for SDGs through improved Asset Recovery and Asset return.

2. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, it is no news that corruption is the greatest tragedy and main obstacle to the stability and growth of developing countries and Nigeria is not exempted. The many faces of corruption and the various ways it affects and impacts on the socio-economic and political systems of our country and the continent are too glaring and have been well documented for serious lessons to be learnt. The greatest expectation of his Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari remains the ability of this government to exterminate the virus of the monster called corruption. Consequently, asset recovery has become a priority on the anti-corruption agenda of this

Administration. This has been appropriately articulated in the National Anti-corruption Strategy, 2017.

3. The principles behind the recovery and return of assets include the common understanding that it is an economic intervention strategy with potentials for bringing back stolen commonwealth, thus, increasing the revenue profile of the government; to the extent, it serves as a restitution to the society/citizens 'victimized' by acts of corruption. Assets recovery and return also aims to deny criminals their illegal gain and prevent them from misusing it for organized crime purposes.

4. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen corruption constitutes an unusual and extraordinary threat to the well-being, national security, and economy of Nigeria. As a government, through the anti-corruption drive, we have engaged and promoted multi-sectoral reforms including (i) the enforcement of Treasury Single Account (TSA); (ii) strict implementation of the Bank Verification Number (BVN) Policy; (iii) the Voluntary Asset and Income Declaration Scheme (VAIDS); Signing of the Open Government Partnership (OGP); and (iv) strengthening of our anti-corruption institutions among others. Mr. President only a few days ago signed a new Executive Order on preservation of assets connected with corruption. This has taken the fight against corruption to another level worthy of commendation.

5. This Roundtable could not have been organized at a better time as it coincides with the celebration of the 1st African day of Anti-Corruption. I therefore congratulate all of us for this monumental initiative aimed at salvaging

our continent. Your deliberations, conclusions and recommendations must be widely circulated to enrich every nation's ability to tackle corruption. I also believe that this Roundtable will further enhance our capacity in effective policy formulation, articulation, coordination, implementation and monitoring.

6. At this juncture, I wish to congratulate the Presidential Advisory Committee Against Corruption (PACAC) for all the pioneering work, the legislative reforms, the publications and engagements with domestic and international stakeholders. I also wish to encourage the management of Anti-Corruption Agencies to take advantage of the benefits offered by this Roundtable to enhance their competence in fighting corruption holistically.

7. Thank you for listening and I wish you fruitful deliberations.