



# Human & Environmental Development Agenda

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20<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Alhaji Ibrahim Dan Azumi Gwarzo  
The Chairman,  
Governing Board,  
Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi  
FIIRO Road, Via Cappa Bus Stop  
Off Agege Motor Road,  
Oshodi,  
Lagos

Original Copy Received by MR  
Mr Michael T.

23-01-2020

Dear Sir;

## RE: APPOINTMENT OF ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL/CEO FOR FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH, OSHODI

The above subject matter refers.

We write with reference to the above subject matter. Our letter to your office was based on the report published by Punch Newspaper<sup>1</sup> on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 that the Director-General of the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi, Dr. Chima Igwe, came under probe after failing to present his Ph.D. certificate more than 17 years after claiming to have bagged the degree from Universite Nationale du Benin (now Universite d'Abomey- Calavi) in the Benin Republic and it is alleged that he had received several promotions based on the purported degree.

It was reported that the only evidence of the purported Ph.D. for 18 years is an attestation letter. It was reported that the issue became contentious when the tenure of the immediate past Director-General of FIIRO, Prof. Gloria Elemo, ended and there was the need for a new head for the institute. The governing board of the institute, while shopping for a replacement, called for the files of senior officers of the agency and Mr. Igwe being the most senior was to be next in line. However, the controversy then resurfaced when he could not produce the Ph.D. certificate in his file to support his claim.

According to the report, Punch Newspaper's reporter had attempted to reach out to the university on this issue, but it has been to no avail. The reporter then visited Faculte Des Sciences et Techniques (FAST) where Mr. Igwe claimed to have bagged the degree and the correspondent spoke to the Deputy Director of the Doctoral School, Prof. Wotto, who allegedly authored the attestation letter.

According to the report, The Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission suspended investigation on the case. However, on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019<sup>2</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> <https://punchng.com/from-benin-with-fraud-dg-secures-fiiro-top-job-without-claimed-phd-certificate/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://punchng.com/breaking-icpc-reopens-investigation-into-fiiro-dg-phd/>

it was conveyed by Punch Newspaper that The Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission has reopened the investigation into the controversial doctorate of the acting Director-General of the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi, Dr. Chima Igwe, following an investigation by a Punch News correspondent that the 57-year-old Igwe might have been fraudulently promoted without a doctorate he claimed he obtained from Abomey Calavi University in the Benin Republic 18 years ago. Based on the report, the ICPC spokesperson, Rasheedat Okoduwa, stated the same during a telephone interview with PUNCH.

As stated in our previous correspondence that the position occupied by the Director-General being the Chief Executive of the Institute is a position subject to and bound by the Federal Civil Service Rules. The allegations leveled against the Director-General, Mr. Igwe is such that is within the definition of Serious Misconduct as defined in the Federal Government Civil Service Rules in Rule 030401 which defines *Serious misconduct as a specific act of very serious wrongdoing and improper behavior which is inimical to the image of the service and which can be investigated and if proven, may lead to dismissal.* Also, Chapter 3, Section 4, 030402 (a-w) also enumerates acts that constitute serious misconduct and out of the lot, we consider the Director-General in breach of the following, according to the allegations leveled in the charge against him by the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC); *as in Rule 030402 ( a) Falsification of records; (b) Suppression of records;*

We hereby reiterate our stance that Rule 030406 which states that *suspension shall apply where a prima facie case, the nature of which is serious, has been established against an officer and it is considered necessary in the public interest that he/she should forthwith be prohibited from carrying out his/her duties and pending investigation into the misconduct, the Federal Civil Service Commission or the Permanent Secretary/Head of Extra-Ministerial Office (if within his/her delegated powers) shall forthwith suspend him/her from the exercise of the powers and functions of his/her office and from the enjoyment of his/her emolument.*

Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Minister of Science and Technology, in his response to your letter with reference number 702.31/C4/Vol.II/537 dated 16 April, 2019, instructed the Permanent Secretary to direct the immediate past DG of FIIRO to hand over to the most senior director **in line with SGF circular** (the emphasis mine). Mr. Chairman, this same circular (Ref. No. SGF. 50/s.II/C.2/268) was quoted in your letter which the Honourable Minister had only acceded to your request for the outgone DG to hand over to another Director in Acting capacity, except Mr. Igwe who, according to your letter, "... has issues with his Ph.D certificate which he is yet to submit seventeen years submitting a letter of attestation to completion of Ph.D degree, even after he had been given ultimatum to submit...." .

The Secretary to the Government of the Federation circular in reference above was unambiguous concerning the succession of out going head of agencies of government such as FIIRO. According to the circular, dated 4<sup>th</sup> December, 2017 and personally signed by Mr. Boss Mustapha, it was stated in paragraph 2 as follows: **"Furthermore, pending the appointment of a substantive Head of Extra-Ministerial Department/Director General/Chief Executive officer of Parastatals, Agency, Commission and Government owned company, the outgoing Chief Executive Officer must handover to the next most Senior Officer of the establishment, as long as the officer does not have any pending disciplinary matter. Outgoing heads of Extra-**

**Ministerial Department/Director General/Chief Executive officer of Parastatals, Agencies, Commission and Government owned companies, are not allowed the discretion of choosing the officer to whom they will handover."**

We write this letter to hold firmly to our stance and demand as follows:

- 1 that immediate action be taken to commence the swift and urgent disciplinary action against the Acting Director-General, through his suspension, due to the reopening of investigation as confirmed by ICPC, as the Civil Service rules are clear on this position;
- 2 that the immediate past D.G should be reported by the Institute to the appropriate authorities for disciplinary action to be taking against her for violation of the extant rule guiding her handing over of power as DG;
- 3 that the next in seniority to Mr. Igwe be appointed the Acting Director General of the Institute pending the appointment of a substantive Director General/CEO;
- 4 that the board and Federal Ministry of Science of Technology commence the process of appointing a substantive Director general/CEO without further delay;
- 5 that failure to act in accordance with the directive of the honourable Minister and Circular from the Secretary to the Government of Federation is considered a serious infraction on the part of the Board and others associated with decision making in the Institute.

It is important to note that our organization believes in the presumption of innocence and basis for our request is premised on the allegations and the affirmed investigation by ICPC as a ground for the serious misconduct to warrant an immediate suspension of Mr. Igwe.

In this circumstance, we hereby demand that the Governing Board of the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi accede to demands contain in this letter **within 14 Days** of the receipt of this letter, or we shall without further recourse to you demand same and indictment of your board before appropriate law enforcement agencies and court of competent jurisdiction.

We look forward to your response.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



f **Olanrewaju Suraju**  
Chairman

**CC: The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria**  
**Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR**  
**Abuja**

