

25th April, 2019

Gen. Abdulrahman Bello Dambazau Rtd.
The Minister
Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs
Block F, Old Federal Secretariat,
Garki Area,
Wuse 2, Garki,
Abuja



064-1

Dear Sir,

**REQUEST PURSUANT TO THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT, 2011 FOR
DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF ABDULRASHEED
ABDULLAHI FORCE ON PENSION REFORMS**

The above subject matter refers.

Human and Environmental Development Agenda Resource Centre is a non-governmental organization and non-partisan human rights and development league. It has the mandate to protect and promote universally recognized human rights, accountability and environmental justice in Nigeria and Africa, in accordance with international standards. These objectives are pursued through research and publications, campaigns, human rights education and empowerment projects and programmes.

Sometime in October 24, 2017, it was reported by Punch Newspaper¹ that Mr. Abdulrasheed Maina, the former Director, Customs, Immigration and Prisons Pensions Office (CIPPO) and acting Chairman, Pension Reform Task Team (PRTT), absconded from the country as a result of the gravity of overwhelming evidence that the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) had against him. And it was reported that on his return to the country, he was reinstated to the civil service and promoted despite absconding from his duty post since 2013.

According to the report, the gathering of evidence against the number one pension swindler in the history of the country by the EFCC began in 2010, when the commission was invited by the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) to assist in the verification/biometric exercise of Federal Civil Service Pensioners. It was reported that at the inception of the investigation, two fake pensioners, who were beneficiaries of payment mandates dated August 31 2009 and issued to the Office of the Head of Civil Service of the Federation (OHCSF) to assist in the verification/biometric OHCSF account (210430000545801) at the defunct Fin-Bank for a combined sum of N94.5million were discovered which led to their questioning by the EFCC. It was reported that the EFCC found 66 illegally operated accounts maintained by the OHCSF. Further scrutiny of the accounts

¹ <https://punchng.com/n2bn-fraud-maina-on-the-run/>

revealed a variety of dubious strategies through which money was obtained from the pension account.

EFCC commendable operatives uncovered the use of phony pensioners to open accounts with different names and documents; the use of collective allowance which entails a director approving the payment for purported staff to a single individual who, after receiving payment in his account, withdrew 90% of the sum and handed it over to the director or any official that facilitated the payment and the use of fictitious contracts, awarded at prohibitive costs, to registered and unregistered companies.

It was reported that between 2008 and 2013, the EFCC discovered that a total of N14billion was lost to various sharp practices. Fictitious contracts drained the government of N5.7billion, while payments to state pension boards and similar organs took N4.1billion. It was reported that through the National Union of Pensioners (NUP), the country was bled to the tune of N2.3billion, while collective allowances accounted for the laundering of N1.4billion. The sum of N254million was laundered through the Association of Federal Public Service Retirees (AFPSR).

It was captured in the report under reference that Mr. Maina was appointed to run the affairs of the department as acting Chairman, Pension Reform Task Force Team (PRTT) and that Mr. Maina's appointment coincided with more looting of funds. It was alleged that the Pension Reform Task Force Team (PRTT) under Mr. Maina's watch, carried out schemes by coming up with a series of fictitious biometric enrolment contracts, phony collective allowances and using carefully selected Information Technology (IT) consultants to load the payroll with fictitious pensioners.

It was alleged that these IT companies, Xangee Technologies and Innovative Solutions were paid for non-existing biometric contracts on the instruction of Mr. Maina. Innovative Solutions was allegedly awarded the biometric data capture contract at an initial sum of N63million. But that the contractor later requested for an additional N136million, taking the total sum to N199million. It was also reported that contractors were paid in excess of agreed contract sum and non-existent contractors were paid for jobs not in existence.

Despite these overwhelming allegations against Mr. Maina, it was reported by Premium Times² on the 20th October, 2017 that he was secretly reinstated despite the fact that he had gone missing after being declared wanted by Economic and Financial Crimes Commission for Corruption allegations demanding that the circumstances to be investigated.

Also, sometimes in 2017, it was conveyed by Premium Times³ on the 23rd October, 2017 that the presidential spokesman, Femi Adesina said His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari gave an order for the immediate dismissal of Abdurashheed Maina and demanded that the circumstances surrounding his reinstatement be investigated as Mr. Maina was in 2013 dismissed by the Federal Civil Service Commission following a recommendation by the Office of the Head of Service but was surreptitiously reinstated as director in charge of human resources in the Ministry of Interior. The report also covered the President's demand for a full report of the circumstances of Abdurashheed Maina's recall and posting to

² <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/246791-shocking-buhari-administration-recalls-wanted-ex-pension-boss-sacked-alleged-corruption.html>

³ <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/246977-buhari-orders-immediate-sack-of-maina-demands-probe-of-recall.html>

the Ministry of Interior from the Office of the Head of Service to be submitted to the office of the Chief of Staff to the President, Mallam Abba Kyari, before the end of work on October 23, 2017.

Up until 2018, Mr. Maina was said to have been on the wanted list of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission for the alleged offences levied against him by the EFCC. However, on April 21, 2019⁴, Punch Newspaper released a report that there are strong indications that the Federal Government has granted the Chairman of the defunct Pension Reform Task Team, Mr Abdulrasheed Maina reprieve. It was alleged in the report that Mr. Maina travels frequently into the country as his name is suspected to be off the watch list of security agencies at the nation's international airport.

In the light of the above, the Ministry of Internal Affairs under your leadership is saddled with the responsibility of recruitment of staff in the Ministry of Internal Affairs where Mr. Maina was allegedly reinstated as director in charge of human resources in the Ministry of Interior, this background forms the reason for this freedom of information request. In the circumstance, we hereby demand for the current employment status of Mr. Maina as we believe the details of this information will aid the investigation of our Organization.

This application is prejudiced on the provisions of Section 2, 3, and 4 of the Freedom of Information Act, 2011.

We look forward to your utmost cooperation and the prompt response to this requested information and in any event, within seven (7) days of the receipt of this application as provided for under the Freedom of Information Act.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,



Rebecca David (Miss)
(Legal Officer)

⁴ <https://punchng.com/n2-1bn-pension-fraud-security-agencies-remove-maina-from-watch-list/>

