

12th April, 2018

Mr. AKINWUNMI AMBODE
Executive Governor of Lagos State
Lagos State House

Alausa, Ikeja,

Lagos State.



2.05pm

Dear Sir,

DEMAND FOR THE CANCELLATION OF THE CONTRACT (COLLECTION OF LAND USE CHARGE) TO DE-SOFFITS ON THE SUSPICION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST.

Above subject refers

Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA Resource Center) 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 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] programmes.

According to SaharaReporters publication of March 30, 2018, it was reported that two companies, linked with All Progressives Congress (APC) leader, Mr. Bola Tinubu, and Mr. Lasisi Olalekan, Special Adviser on Taxation to Mr. Akinwumi Ambode, Governor of Lagos State, were awarded the consultancy to collect the contentious Land Use Charge in Lagos State. They are expected to handle the collection along with Alpha Beta, another company with links to Mr. Tinubu.

The 400 percent hike in the Land Use Charge, following an amendment of the law backing it, has provoked strident disapproval by the public. The disapproval became more intense after it was discovered that Alpha Beta, in which Mr. Tinubu is a major shareholder or the owner, was inserted as a collecting agent. SaharaReporters investigations revealed that the two other collecting companies are Information Connectivity Solutions Limited (ICSL) and De Soffit Consults Limited. ICSL, SaharaReporters discovered, is a sister organization to Mr. Tinubu's Alpha beta.

SaharaReporter's reported searches at the Corporate Affairs Commission(CAC) showed that ICSL has two directors, Messrs. Abiodun Akinkunmi and Lanre Bankole. Mr. Akinkunmi, a former Lagos State Finance Commissioner, was on the board of Alpha Beta while serving as commissioner, a contravention of the Code of Conduct for Public Officers.

Upon registration, SaharaReporters gathered, the shareholders of ICSL were Alpha Beta Consulting Limited with 4,999,999 shares and Mr. Tunde Badejo, who had just one share. To deflect suspicion, Alpha Beta transferred its shares to Connectivity Investment Holding Company (CIHC) and the Document of Transfer was filed at CAC on 13 July 2017. CIHC further transferred all its shares to ICSL on 28 July 2015.

The second company, De Soffit Consults Limited, with registration number RC 932446, has as one of its directors, Mr. Lasisi Olalekan, current Special Adviser on Taxation and Revenue Matters to Mr. Ambode. According to documents from the CAC, Olalekan owns 40 percent equity in the company, while one Mr. Ogunlana Femi owns 30 percent. The remaining 30 percent is owned by one Mr. Lawal Olanrewaju.

The appointment of Mr. Olalekan as Special Adviser to the Governor took effect while holding the position of Managing Director of De Soffit Consults Limited. Since assuming office as Special Adviser and up till date Mr. Olalekan functions as a director of De Soffit in contravention of the Public Service Code, and consultancy of tax collection awarded to his company in violation of procurement law of the State.

The Country's Public Service Code bars public office holders from holding interest or directorship in private organizations while in the public office. The code equally bars public officials from putting themselves in positions where personal interest could conflict with their duties and responsibilities. Section 1 of the Fifth schedule of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Part 1 as amended (Code of Conduct for Public Officers) provides that "a public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflicts with his duties and responsibilities".

In the light of the above information, HEDA hereby demand the cancellation of the consultancy award to De- soffits on the suspicion of conflict of interest in the screening and appointment of the company.

Failure to have a confirmation of action to this effect or any convincing response from your office within 2 weeks of the receipt of this letter will leave our organisation with no option than to seek a legal action for appropriate pronouncement on this matter.

We look forward to your usual timely action and response.

Thanks.

Yours Faithfully,

for: 
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Olanrewaju Suraju

(Chairman)