

24th April, 2019

The Senate President
The National Assembly
Three Arms Zone
Abuja



Dear Sir,

RE: INVESTIGATION OF THE N2 BILLION NAIRA PENSION REFORMS FRAUD - DEMAND FOR THE FINAL INVESTIGATION REPORT AND SENATE DECISION ON THE PUBLIC HEARING CARRIED OUT ON ABDULRASHEED ABDULLAHI MAINA, FORMER CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENTIAL TASK 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 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

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

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.

In furtherance of the above, it was reported by punch newspaper² on the 24th of October, 2017 that the Senate commenced investigation of the circumstances surrounding the return of embattled ex-Chairman of the Presidential Task Force on Pension Reforms, Abdulrasheed Maina, and his reinstatement into the civil service of the Federal Government on the 24th October, 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, 2019³, 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.

The plausibility of the reinstatement of Mr. Maina into the Federal Civil Service was the major reason why the Senate under your leadership set up the committee. However, till date, which is over a year after the committee was set up to investigate the said reinstatement, no report of the investigation has been released by the committee in accordance with the rules of the Senate. The hard-earned taxpayers' resources were committed to the exercise, while public expectation of and trust is equally crucial as much as responsibilities placed on the parliament by the constitution in matters of this nature. Inconclusive and compromised parliamentary investigations embolden impunity of the executive.

² <https://punchng.com/breaking-senate-set-up-committee-to-probe-maina/>

³ <https://punchng.com/n2-1bn-pension-fraud-security-agencies-remove-maina-from-watch-list/>

Our organization believes in the presumption of innocence and upholding of due process; hence the need for this petition in order to invoke the powers vested in your Senate.

We write this petition to demand that the committee set up to undertake the investigation releases findings of its investigation and expose circumstances surrounding the ignominious surreptitious reinstatement of Mr. Maina into the service of Federal Government. This case has to be seen to a logical conclusion so the perpetrators are visited with full wrath of the law.


We as an organization relentless on seeing transparency and accountability actualized, owing to this backdrop, we hereby demand that you use your good office to ensure that the committee submit its findings for debate and approval of the Senate so as for the course of Justice and transparency to be duly seen to have been followed.

Our demand is strongly anchored and founded on our patriotic mandate to promote and foster accountability while ensuring transparency and participatory governance in the country.

We look forward to your prompt response and action.

While thanking you, accept our best regards.

Yours faithfully,



Olanrewaju Suraju
Chairman