



28th February, 2019

The Chairman
Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission
Plot 802, Constitution Avenue,
Zone A9, Central Area,
Garki, Abuja.

Dear Sir,

DEMAND FOR THE IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF THE CORRUPT OFFICIALS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED UNAUTHORISED WOOD CHARCOAL PRODUCTION AND EXPORTATION BY AN UNREGISTERED CHINESE COMPANY

The above subject matter refers.

Human and Environmental Development Agenda (HEDA 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.

This petition is anchored on a report published by the International Centre for Investigative Reporting on the 19th February, 2019¹. In summary, the report captured the alleged illegal wood charcoal production and exportation by an unauthorized and unregistered Chinese company, Kwo Chief Investment Limited, who has set up two factories in Enugu State at Ikem in Isi-Uzo and Ogrugu road at Akachele in Nsukka. It is stated that this act of wood production and exportation is done without official permits from the state and federal agencies and it is stated that the activity violates the National Environmental (Control of Charcoal Production and Export) Regulations, 2014.

It is reported that customs officers are bribed by the Chinese company to export containers of packaged charcoal through the Onne Port in Rivers State. It is also reported that the company is not duly incorporated in Nigeria. It is also reported that regulatory and law enforcement agencies are abreast of the unauthorised unregistered Chinese company carrying out illegal logging of wild trees for charcoal production and exportation from Enugu State, and it is reported that nothing has been done to stop the operation even when the agencies are aware that the company is illegally producing and exporting charcoal.

It was equally reported that the act of the Chinese company on the long run will expose the society to a high risk of heart and lung cancer because of exposure to black carbon particles. From this report under reference, it was revealed that the Federal Department of Forestry regulation states, before embarking on commercial charcoal production, that "a person shall not be granted a permit for charcoal production without having a reforestation and rehabilitation plan for the area from where the charcoal will be derived or produced."

¹ <https://www.icirnigeria.org/investigation-unlicensed-chinese-company-overruns-forests-for-wood-charcoal-in-enugu-state/>

The report also captured, "According to Global Forest Watch, from 2001 to 2017, Nigeria lost 738kha of tree cover, equivalent to a 7.3 per cent decrease since 2000, and 56.3Mt of carbon dioxide of emissions. Adding to this, from 2001 to 2015, 15 per cent of tree cover loss in the country occurred in areas where the dominant drivers of loss resulted in permanent deforestation"

We hold a similar view because part of our organization's mandate is to promote environmental sustainability and justice thereby promoting and preserving the eco-system from activities that degrade the eco-system like in this instant case, deforestation which is a major cause of climate change. We believe Foreign Direct Investment is a great contributor to the economy, however investments are expected to respect local laws and also in legitimate businesses with due process followed to actualize them. The Chinese company carrying out alleged illegal production and exportation of charcoal ought to be one means of foreign direct investment but this has a more devastating consequences for the country and its people that the investment opportunities.

And it is alleged that political leaders, law enforcement agents, custom officials saddled with the responsibilities of looking out for the well-being of the citizens and the country at large were allegedly compromised by the Chinese company to illegally get its ways; no registrations, no requisite permits and no commitment to reforestation thereby carrying out an activity that is endangering to our eco-system.


We believe that this alleged act will most likely rub the economy of the state of utmost productivity and development as taxes and charges due to support the development of the state are evaded thereby prompting criminality, lawlessness, underdevelopment and ultimately a total and out right disrespect of foreigners for laws of the land.

In line with the above, we hereby demand an urgent and immediate investigation of the reported allegations with the aim of unveiling the masks behind the alleged operation of the unregistered Chinese company in carrying out the wood charcoal production and exportation in Nigeria with a view to serving as a deterrent to future likely perpetrators and recovering appropriate revenue for the country's development.

We look forward to your usual prompt response and action.

While thanking you in anticipation of your response, please accept our best regards.

Yours faithfully,


f Olanrewaju Suraju
Chairman