



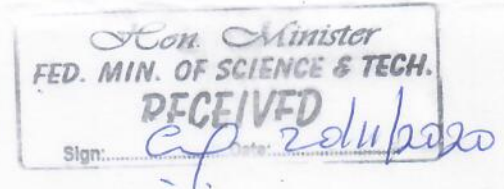
Human & Environmental Development Agenda

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11th October, 2020

The Minister
Federal Ministry of Science and Technology
Federal Secretariat,
Garki
Abuja



Dear Sir

RE: THE INTERDICTION OF DR. CHIMA IGWE, FORMER ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL OF FEDERAL INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH, OSHODI,

I write on behalf of HEDA Resource Centre, a non-governmental organization and non-partisan human rights and development league with the mandate to protect and promote universally recognized human rights, accountability and environmental justice in Nigeria and Africa, following international standards.

Sometimes on the 3rd September 2019, Punch Newspaper¹ published a report, exposing the Director-General of the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Oshodi, Dr. Chima Igwe, as 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 Republic of Benin and on the basis upon which he had received several promotions, including his acting capacity as DG of the Institute. It was reported that the only shred of evidence in support of the purported Ph.D. claim for 18 years was 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 the appointment of a new head for the institute. The governing board of the institute, while reviewing the profile of senior members of staff to appoint the most senior in acting capacity, called for the files of senior officers of the agency and Mr. Igwe being the most senior was to be so appointed in acting capacity. However, the controversy then resurfaced when he could not produce the Ph.D. certificate in his file to support his claim.

Based on the aforementioned and the affirmed investigation by ICPC, our organization wrote a petition to the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation dated the

¹ <https://punchng.com/from-benin-with-iraud-dg-secures-file-10y-10m-without-stamped-phd-certificate/> published on 3rd September, 2019

6th September 2019 demanding the suspension of the former Director-General, Mr. Chima Igwe within 14 days of the receipt of our letter. This letter is enclosed for easy reference..

As a follow up to this letter by our organization to the Head of Service, a petition was filed with the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission dated 28th October 2019 for investigation of the allegations levelled against Dr. Chima Igwe and for the Commission to recommend the DG to the Secretary of the Government of the Federation for immediate interdiction. The letter to ICPC is also enclosed.

According to the report relayed above, The Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission investigated the case and on the 31st December 2019², it was conveyed by Punch Newspaper that The Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission has opened 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 Mr. Chima Igwe might have been fraudulently promoted without a doctorate he claimed to have obtained from Abomey Calavi University in the Benin Republic for 18 years. Based on the report, the ICPC spokesperson, Rasheedat Okoduwa, stated the same during a telephone interview with PUNCH.

In furtherance of the investigation by ICPC, our Organization did a follow-up letter dated 9th January 2020 to ICPC reiterating our earlier demand for investigation and recommendation to the Secretary to the Government of the Federation for the Interdiction/Suspension of the above-named Director-General. The follow-up letter to ICPC is also hereby enclosed

Upon the failure of the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of the Federation to accede to our demand and upon the resumption of the investigation by ICPC, we wrote another letter dated the 20th January 2020 to the Chairman of the Governing Board of FIIRO demanding the below as stated in the letter;

"....

- 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;*

² <https://punchng.com/breaking-icpc-reopens-investigation-into-fir-dg-promo/> published on 31st December, 2019

- 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...."*

Find enclosed this letter.

As relayed in our letters to the Office of the Head of the Civil Service of Federation and the Chairman, Governing Board of FIRRO that the allegations levelled 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) which 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 levelled 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;*

Rule 030406 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.*

The findings of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) indicted the former Acting DG, stating that after investigation, it was discovered that Mr. Chima Igwe was yet to defend his Ph.D. thesis since 2002 that is over 18 years. According to the letter from ICPC to your office as Minister for Science and Technology and minute to the Board of the Federal Institute of Industrial Research, Dr. Chima Igwe was removed as Acting DG by the Governing Board of the Institute and the Director of Production, Analytical and Laboratory Management, Dr. Agnes Asagbra, was appointed to take over from him. Find attached the letter from ICPC.

The failure of the former Director-General of the Federal Institute of Industrial Research to produce his certificate is as relayed in the provisions of Section 105 of the Criminal Code Act which states that

"Any person who, being authorised or required by law to give any certificate touching any matter by virtue whereof the rights of any person may be prejudicially affected, gives a certificate which is, to his knowledge, false in any material particular, is guilty of a felony and is liable to imprisonment for three years".

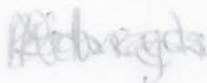
Also, the act by the DG amounts to obtaining under false pretence, as stated in Section 418 of the Criminal Code Act

"Any representation made by words, writing, or conduct, of a matter of fact, either past or present, which representation is false in fact and which the person making it knows to be false or does not believe to be true, is a false pretence."

This further correspondence with you is informed by recent response received from the office of the Head of Service dated the 20th October, 2020 directing that we channel our letter of demand for the interdiction and prosecution of Dr. Chima Igwe to the Ministry of Science and Technology as the supervisory Ministry. We therefore, by this letter demand the interdiction and recommendation for prosecution of Mr. Chima Igwe for the above relayed alleged criminal act.

We anticipate your prompt response in this regard.

Yours faithfully,


Olanrewaju Suraju
Chairman

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