



**TCI celebrates International Anti-Corruption Day 2017 on the theme: “Uniting Against Corruption”**

The International Anti-Corruption Day was celebrated globally on Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> December 2017. It is a day set aside by the United Nations to raise awareness and sensitize everybody about the destructive impact of corruption on the society. Corruption undermines democratic institutions and the rule of law. It is a key barrier to effective economic development. It creates and deepens poverty, inequality and social instability. It is a cankerworm that corrodes the very foundations of any society. No nation, big or small, rich or poor is immune to corruption.

The Turks and Caicos Islands Integrity Commission (the Commission) joins the international community in this celebration on the Theme “Uniting Against Corruption”. The Commission, drawing from local, regional and international experiences and best practices, firmly believes, that to effectively combat and prevent corruption, will require the united and collaborative efforts of all - the public and private sector institutions and persons, all persons in public life (including House of Assembly Members, Ministers of Government and Public Officers), Corporate and Business entities, Civil and Religious Societies and the Media. In this regard, the Commission is encouraged to note with gratitude, that these collaborative efforts have enabled Turks and Caicos Islands to score a number of regional ‘firsts’ in anti-corruption and good governance initiatives. These include the robust regulation of political financing over the last two general elections; the formulation, publication and enforcement of a comprehensive Code of Conduct for Persons in Public life; the more than 90% compliance rate by public officials who are required to file declarations with the Commission; the best-practice public procurement and public finance management regimes; the public and live broadcasts of the proceedings of the House of Assembly and its accountability committees and the recent enactment of the Bribery Ordinance. Consequently, the TCI has not only earned a leadership role in the Commonwealth Caribbean anti-corruption efforts, but serves as one of the regional reference points for anti-corruption and good governance best practices.

Moreover, the Commission acknowledges the critical role the youth and young persons are playing and will continue to play in sustaining the fight against corruption. The Commission, through its Public Education Unit, has therefore closely engaged these leaders of tomorrow over the last two years in the promotion of integrity through annual Inter-High School Integrity debates; the Community College speak-off events; primary and secondary schools’ poster, song and essay competitions. Since last week, the Commission has been visiting the relevant schools to deliver to their students, trophies, certificates and cash awards for their excellent performances in these competitions and in appreciation of their participation.

Director of TCI Integrity Commission, Eugene Otuonye, Q.C. commented: “ *The milestones achieved by the TCI in its anti-corruption and good governance efforts are not only remarkable but inspiring. Nevertheless, the Commission recognizes that there is still a long way to go and much more work to be done over time. But by uniting against corruption, by saying NO to corruption and by REPORTING corruption, we will be well on our way to a TCI with a zero-tolerance for corruption.*”

Eugene Otuonye, Q.C.  
Director