



Remarks by
David Oginde, PhD, FCS
Chairperson,
Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC)
during the closing ceremony of the African Asset
Recovery Practitioners Forum (AARP Forum) on
17th April 2025 at the Panari Hotel, Nairobi

- **Hon Seynabou Diakhate Ndiaye**, Chairperson, African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC);

- **Members** of the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC);

- **Mr. Issaka Garba Abdou**, Head of Governance and Human Rights Division, Department of Political Affairs, Peace, and Security, African Union Commission;

- **Dr Musa Aliyu**, Interim Chairperson, African Asset Recovery Practitioners Forum AARP Steering Council;

- **Heads of Institutions** present;

Distinguished delegates;

Good afternoon

1. It gives me great pleasure to join you this afternoon for the official closing ceremony of the Inaugural Meeting of the African Asset Recovery Practitioners' Forum (AARP-Forum). Thank you for the great milestones covered by you – distinguished participants – over the last three days.
2. I particularly note the immense support demonstrated by the delegates from across Africa who assented to and ratified the Charter, thereby becoming the founding members. It projects immense dedication towards achieving the objectives of the forum

and by extension the Common African Position on the Recovery of African Assets (CAPAR).

3. I am duly informed that over the last three days, the vacancies at the steering Council were filled and Focal point persons nominated. This demonstrates the commitment, focus and dedication of members. To cap it all the various working groups were constituted and the road map and way forward agreed upon.
4. I wish to applaud each delegate, facilitator and speaker who graced this event. Your presence, unwavering dedication and hard work have been the backbone of this event. You have created a great platform for partnerships and collaboration, within the

Region and across the entire Africa that will support asset recovery initiatives.

5. Asset Recovery is about Reclaiming Africa's Future - reclaiming a future that has been stolen—not by fate, but by corruption.

6. A Nigerian proverb says, *"When the roots of a tree begin to decay, it spreads death to the branches."*

7. Across our beloved continent, too many children walk dusty roads to broken schools. Too many mothers lie in clinics with no medicine. Too many dreams are extinguished by the weight of poverty. Yet, we know this truth: **Africa is not poor. Africa is**

being looted. Looted by a few greedy individuals who spread death to our people.

8. The Ghanaians have a powerful saying: *A man who uses public property for private gain is like one who drinks water from the community well and then blocks it for others.* — Akan Proverb
9. When public resources are stolen, it does not vanish—it hides. In offshore accounts, in luxury buildings, in faraway banks. Thus, the well of our prosperity is blocked. Asset recovery is the task of unblocking the well of this hidden treasure—not for revenge, but for **reparation**. For the mother who deserves clean water. For the youth who deserves a future. For a continent that deserves its dignity.

10. But for Asset Recovery to be successful, we must work collaboratively. It must be a movement for all of Africa. An Akan Proverb says: *Wisdom is like a baobab tree; no one person can embrace it alone.*
11. Asset Recovery cannot be a journey for one nation. That's why we need partnerships – across communities and across nations. We need judges and journalists; whistleblowers and watchdogs; Elders and youth. We need local hands and global allies. Because **corruption does not respect borders**, and neither must justice.
12. Because the child being denied education today may be the future leader of this continent. The hospital being robbed of

medicine today may one day heal nations. And the voice that cries out today may be the voice that restores our assets for tomorrow.

13. Asset recovery is not just about money. It's about **morality**. It's about **legacy**. It's about **justice**.

14. Let us speak with one voice, and let it be loud and clear: **Africa will not be robbed by neo-colonialists as we sit and watch. We are going after the thief and the robber to take back our destiny!** We must not allow the looters to enjoy the proceeds of their crime.

15. I believe the African Asset Recovery Practitioners' Forum will widen the collaboration network for the respective Anti-Corruption

Authorities. This forum provides a platform for effective information sharing, support, mutual assistance for enhanced turnaround time for asset recovery and restitution of corruptly acquired assets for public good.

16. Let me thank all the distinguished dignitaries who took time to attend this meeting led by

- a. **Hon. Seynabou Diakhate Ndiaye**, Chairperson, African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption (AUABC);
- b. Mr. Issaka Garba Abdou, Head of Governance and Human Rights Division, Department of Political Affairs, Peace, and Security, African Union Commission;

c. Dr Musa Aliyu, Interim Chairperson, African Asset Recovery Practitioners Forum (AARP) Steering Council and all heads and representatives of National and Federal Anti-Corruption, Investigative, Prosecution and Asset Recovery bodies from across Africa. Your participation emboldened our resolve.

17. I also wish to express appreciation to our sponsors, the GIZ Global Program on Illicit Financial Flows (GP IFF program), the African Development Bank, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Civil Forum for Asset Recovery (CIFAR) among others who played a key role in ensuring the success of this meeting. It is my hope that you will continue supporting this forum as it implements its programmes.

18. I further extend my appreciation to the African Union through the African Union the Advisory Board against Corruption (AUABC) and the African Union Commission - Political Affairs Peace and Security Department (AUC-PAPS) with whom the EACC have co-hosted this event. The meticulous planning and seamless execution has been nothing short of exemplary and we look forward to our continued collaboration and partnership.

19. As we close this inaugural meeting, I encourage each one of you to be an ambassador for the forum by carrying the torch of inspiration lit here. May the aspiration of this Forum be exhibited through each and every one of you.

It is now my singular honour to declare the meeting of the inaugural African Asset Recovery Practitioners Forum officially closed.

I wish you all journey masses and continued success in your endeavours.

**Thank you
God Bless you all!**

**DAVID OGINDE, PHD, FCS,
CHAIRPERSON
THE ETHICS AND ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION (EACC)**