

## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COUNCIL (IRC) & CORRUPTION WATCH**

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**Essay Topic:** “Corruption violates Human rights. Discuss with references to examples from your own country or community.”

### ***A Banknote To Throw Human Rights Into The Abyss Of Oblivion***

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Corruption is prima facie a gangrene that poisons the jugular vein of the African continent namely its population. It is the disease that provides most of the economic issues facing contemporary Africa. This disease violates even the most basic Human Rights. For a banknote, Human Rights are thrown into the abyss of oblivion. Nowadays, several corruption topics hit the news on the continent among others the case Bolloré in West Africa or the case Zuma in South Africa. When we come to the essential question of what are the reasons behind such practice, the answer becomes less obvious. As for the violation of human rights by corruption, it must be stated that this violation is more than obvious. The following lines of our writing will firstly deal with the problematic of corruption in Africa, providing some relevant examples. Subsequently, some causes of corruption. Finally, we will attempt to highlight the negative consequences of corruption on Human Rights on the continent.

“Despite commitments made by African leaders that 2018 is the year of Africa’s fight against corruption, it has not yet translated into concrete progress” (Transparency International, 2018). With a year dedicated to the fight against corruption on the continent, it must be asserted that this desire was not practically expressed. The report drawn up by Transparency International for the year 2018

is without appeal: “most countries make little or no progress in ending corruption”. Most of the African countries are very poorly ranked with only 8 out of 49 countries ranked above the average score of 43 out of 100. Taking as an example the Republic of Guinea, the result is very mixed or at least mediocre. In his speeches, the Guinean president, Alpha Condé speaks a lot. To express the truth, he rarely talks about the moralization of public affairs; and we can understand why. In fact, the ranking gives the Republic of Guinea a score of 27 points out of 100 and ranks the country 148 out of 180 countries in the world; and 31st out of the 49 ranked African countries. The top six ranked African countries (with 50 or more points) are: Botswana 61, Seychelles 60, Cape Verde 55, Rwanda 55, Namibia 51 and Mauritius 50. And the last five African countries are: Equatorial Guinea 17, Guinea Bissau 17, Sudan 16, South Sudan 12 and Somalia 9. Consequently, it would be wise for us to understand the reasons behind any act of corruption.

One of the major causes of corruption is human insatiability. Human beings, by nature, always seek the best. When it comes to money, they always want more; they are almost never satisfied. In addition, another cause of corruption in Africa is that, politicians more often work for their personal interests instead of serving. Today, while the continent is the poorest, we have the richest presidents such as “Ali Bongo in Gabon, the former president of Angola, Eduardo Santos, and Paul Biya in Cameroon...” (Afrique Times). Finally, corruption could be explained by the lack of transparency at institution levels. African institutions are weak, and in most countries, presidents are above the law (an example of Biya who is in power since 1982). This very disappointing rank has many negative implications on Human Rights.

Who says corruption says violation. And who says violation says no respect for human rights or at least, people rights are restricted. According to the United Nations Human Rights Council on the level, pervasiveness and form of

corruption, corruption can have devastating impacts on the availability, quality and accessibility—on the basis of equality—of human rights-related goods and services. Moreover, it undermines the functioning and legitimacy of institutions and processes, the rule of law and ultimately the State itself”. In Africa, this violation of Human rights can be, for instance, in the health sector. With the misappropriation of funds allocated to the health sector, many hospitals, especially public hospitals lack of the basic tools to work efficiently. Therefore, many destitute people receive mediocre services, finally turning to traditional medicine, which often results in even worse consequences. Another concrete example is in French-speaking Africa where, because of corruption, ports in most countries are operated by Bolloré, a French company. “The company controlled today 17 ports in Africa and most of the employees are badly paid” (France24).

Considering what we mentioned above, we can say corruption is a complex and intriguing concept. It is a very amoral practice that violates significantly the Human Rights of the population, especially the proletarians. Therefore, people should know such practice and fight against it.

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