

ABSTRACT
THE NIGERIAN INFORMATION ACT 2011:
A VERITABLE TOOL FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

Nigeria in 2011, enacted the much awaited Freedom of Information Act. Freedom of information connotes access to information held by public authorities, it is a fundamental element of the right to freedom of expression. Freedom of Information Act is therefore, no doubt an important and indispensable tool for enthroneing a democratic and responsible government as it encourages and guarantees openness, transparency and good governance, Prior to the enactment of FOIA of 2011, Nigeria had a plethora of laws shielding civil servants from releasing vital government information on grounds of public interest. These laws also prevented anyone from receiving and reproducing such information, this has of course created a very fertile ground for deep entrenchment of corruption in Nigerian system and has also resulted in unlawful detention and killing of journalists and individuals who violated the law. Little wonder therefore that the passage of FOIA by Nigeria government in 2011 was heralded as another milestone in the country's determination for full democratization. The paper inter-alia examines the historical development and scope of Nigerian Freedom of Information Act 2011; the basis and rationale for the enactment of the Act by the Nigerian government, it also dissects the short comings of the Act and the challenges it has contended with after four years of its implementation. It proffers recommendations on how the Act can fully strengthen the Nigerian democratic process.

Key Words: Freedom of information; Act, Democracy, Nigeria, Freedom of Expression; Journalists

Presenter:

1. Ifemeje Sylvia Chika
Associate Professor of Laws
Department of International Law and Jurisprudence Faculty Of Law
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka Nigeria

2. Odoh Ben Uruchi,
Lecturer,
Department of Public Law
Faculty of Law
Nigerian Police Academy
Wodi Kano Nigeria..