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Muzong Kodi, Corruption and Governance in the DRC during the Transition Period (2003-2006), ISS, 2008, pp.113. ISBN 978-1-920114-43-5

Issues of governance and corruption are central in the realization of development of development in most developing societies, African countries in particular. Bad governance and corruption have hindered development in most African countries. The text is, therefore, well intentioned as it examines the salient issues of governance and corruption in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) paying specific reference to the transition period 2003-2006.

Chapter one, which is the introduction, gave background to the DRC, providing the justification and the objectives of the study. The following chapter gave a historical overview of corruption in the DRC, analyzing the whole history of the DRC from its colonization through to independence. Of importance, this chapter gave an exposition of how corruption was entrenched in the DRC society by both colonial and post-colonial governments.

Chapter three dwelt on the specific period under study (2003-2006), providing the occurrence of corruption in a wide range of areas, from the power sharing processes to electoral processes. How various areas were affected by corruption was examined in detail. Of importance regarding the period of study, the author did conclude that, 'by end of the transition period, corruption had permeated all facets of Congolese people's lives and had deepened their suffering' (40).

In Chapter four, the author analyzed the legal framework for combating corruption in the transition period. He examined the provisions of the anti-corruption laws, citing their weaknesses and strengths and also in comparison to the pre-transition period legislations. The major obstacle to the success, according to the author, is that, '...as they were all imposed by development partners of the DRC, there was no ownership by the Congolese political class' (52).

Chapter five dealt with institutions that were involved in the combating corruption citing the nature of their work in combating corruption. Challenges that emerged in these institutions were also exposed. In essence, as the author observed, ‘the overriding negation of good governance and accountability... made it impossible for anti-corruption bodies to operate effectively’ (70).

Anti-corruption initiatives that were undertaken in the transition periods were analysed in Chapter 6. These included the National Anti-Corruption strategy, audits of state enterprises, The Lutundula Commission, Public Administration Reform, Reform of Public Finance Management, security sector reform, Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative, and The Kimberly Process Certification Scheme. The author did note that all these initiatives did fail or had little success.

The last three chapters offer some recommendations and conclusions pertaining to corruption and governance in the DRC, especially with the coming of a new government.

I found the book informative on its analysis of corruption in DRC, especially giving the historical precedence to the entrenchment of corruption in DRC society. Certainly, achievement of development in the DRC has to tackle this menace that has been bedeviling most societies in Africa.

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