

HURIWA Applauds NDLEA Over Partnership with India Narcotics Bureau to block Illicit Drug flow

Civil rights advocacy group, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria, (HURIWA), on Thursday, applauded the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) for its relentless dedication and commitment to block illicit flow of hard drugs in Nigeria. HURIWA, in a statement by its National Coordinator, Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko, said the Memorandum of Understanding signed between NDLEA and the Narcotics Control Bureau of India is a step in the right direction. The group said the new partnership is another feather to the cap of NDLEA dogged boss, Brig. Gen. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd) in his continued drive to curb drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking in Nigeria and the rest of the world.

HURIWA's Onwubiko said, "The fight against narcotics is a real war and it takes doggedness and uncommon courage to go against deadly men and desperate personalities with connections all over the world. "We salute Brig. Mohamed Buba Marwa (Retd)'s resolve and pursuit to eradicate the problem posed by illicit substances, notably synthetic opioids and Amphetamine Type Stimulants (ATS) which pose a potent threat to our citizens. "It is a well-known fact that diverse kinds of crimes like terrorism, banditry, robbery, pipeline vandalism, cyber fraud, amongst others are intertwined with drug abuse and trafficking of narcotics. We, are therefore, confident that the moves by Brig-Gen Marwa will greatly reduce all shades of crimes in Nigeria."

Asari Dokubo: HURIWA asks Tinubu to set up Independent panel on Oil Theft

Civil rights advocacy group, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria, (HURIWA) has, called on President Bola Tinubu to set up an independent panel to unravel the unending mystery surrounding oil theft in Nigeria and probe oil bunkering and allied crimes, especially from 2015 till date. HURIWA, in a statement by its National Coordinator, Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko, said the government must not spare the culprits identified at the end of the probe but name and shame them and sanction them severely. The group's call comes hours after the allegations by prominent Niger Delta leader and former agitator, Mujahid Asari Dokubo, who accused the Nigerian Army and the Nigerian Navy of being culpable of oil theft in the oil-rich Niger Delta area. Dokubo, who met the President recently at the Aso Rock Villa, Abuja, said, "The military is at the centre of oil theft and we have to make this very clear to the Nigerian public that 99 per cent of oil theft can be traced to the Nigerian military, the Army and the Navy especially."

"The Army and Navy are behind oil theft. They intimidate civil defence, who are by law expected to protect

installations. They tap directly from the oil head. What has been happening in the last eight years is unprecedented anywhere in the world.

"The livelihood of the people is being destroyed. The main culprits are the army and navy. There are notorious army commanders who are known to be the ones behind oil bunkering," the former militant stated. The Nigerian Army has since responded to the allegations, saying it has been vigorously engaged in the fight against illegal oil bunkering, oil theft, illegal oil refining and other sundry crimes in the region with positive results. Also, the Nigerian Navy has challenged Dokubo to produce the names of officers involved in crude oil theft.

In its reaction, HURIWA's Onwubiko said, "The allegations by Dokubo are startling and damning and these allegations must be thoroughly investigated. "We ask that the President set up an seven-man independent panel of criminologists drawn from reputable global fora to investigate the larger cases of crude oil thefts from 2015-2023.

"The panel should identify, prosecute and sanction culprits in the severest of mechanisms and recover to the last dollar public funds diverted through those stolen crude oil by these rogues no matter their statuses. Also, Dokubo who made the allegations must provide irrefutable evidence or be prosecuted for providing false information which is a criminal offence. Oil theft has become a malignant cancer in Nigeria for years. Last October, the Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited said it uncovered an illegal oil connection from Forcados Terminal that operated for nine years with about 600,000 barrels per day of oil lost in the same period.

Similarly, former militant leader, Government Ekpemepulo, popularly known as Tompolo said about 58 illegal oil points have been discovered so far since the operation to end oil theft on the waterways of Delta and Bayelsa states began. In April, the Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative revealed that Nigeria lost 619.7 million barrels of crude oil valued at N16.25tn to crude oil theft between 2009 and 2020.

HURIWA Says It's Shameful FG Employs Asari Dokubo's Men to protect Abuja-Kaduna Road ...demands Immediate Sacking of all Service Chiefs, Security Heads

Civil rights advocacy group, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria, (HURIWA), on Sunday, said it is shameful the Federal Government employed mercenaries working for leader of the Niger Delta Volunteer Force, Asari Dokubo, to protect the notorious and terrorist-saturated Abuja-Kaduna road. HURIWA, in a statement by its National Coordinator, Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko, said the government, especially the Nigerian Army and the Nigeria Police Force have failed in their primary duty of protection of the citizens as enshrined in

the 1999 Constitution. The group also demanded the immediate sacking of all service chiefs and heads of security agencies by President Bola Tinubu, saying they don't deserve to be in office if non-state actors are being employed to do their constitutional responsibilities of protecting Nigerians and other assets in the country against internal and external aggression.

HURIWA's call for action is coming days after Dokubo told reporters at the State House on Friday after meeting with President Tinubu that his men "employed by Nigerian government" are the ones securing Abuja-Kaduna road and not Nigerian Army as we are made to believe. The former militant said, "I am a participant in this war. I fight on the side of the government of the Nigerian state in Plateau, Niger, Anambra, Imo, Abia and Rivers. And in Abuja today, you are travelling to Kaduna on this road. It is not the army that makes it possible for you to travel to Abuja or travel to Kaduna, and vice versa. It is my men, employed by the government of the Nigerian state, stationed in Niger. "Today, you travel to Baga, you go to Shiroro, you go to Wase. We have lost so many men and in all these engagements, we don't even have one per cent of the armament deployed by the Nigerian military. One per cent and we have had resounding success." On 28 March 2022, an Abuja-Kaduna train was attacked in Katari, Kaduna State, killing scores whilst hundreds were kidnapped and millions of naira paid before the marauders release their hostages over six months later.

Earlier, there were revelations that the Muhammadu Buhari administration gave multi-billion pipeline surveillance and protection contract to a private firm, Tantita Security Services led by a former militant leader, Government Ekpemepulo, popularly known as Tompolo. HURIWA's Onwubiko said, "The Federal Government owes Nigerians the obligation of disclosing the nature of quasi-military contracts given to Asari Dokubo that he said he is doing in parts of the country. "On what legal footing are those mercenary duties carried out by Asari Dakubo and why is government making use of private mercenaries but has not openly granted gun licences to Amotekun, Ebube Agu, Benue Guards, and other Nigerians interested in procuring such to protect themselves? "What is the difference between these mercenaries and the so-called unknown gunmen in the South-East going by the admission of Asari Dakubo and is it the Federal Government that deployed private mercenaries to the South-East and other parts of the Federation? "Secondly, we ask that the new President sack all the service chiefs and heads of security agencies so that the new government can begin a clean sweep of terrorists, kidnappers and freelance armed killers still operating all across Nigeria.

HURIWA Calls for Sirika's Arrest Over alleged 'Fraudulent' Nigeria Air

Civil rights advocacy group, Human Rights Writers

Association of Nigeria, (HURIWA) has asked anti-graft agencies, especially the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) to arrest the immediate past Minister of Aviation, Hadi Sirika over the grossly suspicious and "fraudulent" national carrier project called Nigeria Air. HURIWA, in a statement by its National Coordinator, Comrade Emmanuel Onwubiko said the sham hurriedly unveiled by Sirika May 26, 2023, the last official day of the Muhammadu Buhari administration is suspect. The group said the EFCC should swing into action to probe the former minister now that the Senate and House of Representatives Committees on Aviation have separately declared that the project is a fraud. Recall that the Federal Government had in July 2018 unveiled the much-awaited new national carrier during the Farnborough Air Show in London. In eight years, the Buhari administration with Sirika as the arrowhead spent over N85 billion on Nigeria Air, as shown in data by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) and Compilation of Budgetary Allocations between 2016 and 2023. At separate meetings with Interim Managing Director of Nigeria Air, Capt Dapo Olumide, on Tuesday, the Chairman of the Senate Aviation Committee, Senator Biodun Olujimi; and the Chairman of the House Committee on Aviation, Nnolim Nnaji, both agreed that the launch of Nigeria Air is a fraud. In fact, the Interim Managing Director of Nigeria Air admitted that the Boeing 737-800 aircraft used to unveil the country's national carrier was a legitimate chartered flight from Ethiopian Airlines. He said the aircraft returned to Ethiopian Airlines after the unveiling. HURIWA's Onwubiko said, "The revelations coming out on the Nigeria Air project is a putrid smell of deep-rooted corruption in the Federal Ministry of Aviation under the eight-year watch of the then Minister, Hadi Sirika. "The Interim Managing Director of Nigeria Air, Capt Dapo Olumide told legislators on Tuesday that the aircraft paraded as Nigeria Air plane belonged to Ethiopian Airlines and not to Nigeria whereas the then minister paraded the aircraft as being originally owned by Nigeria. This is fraud of the highest order and the lawmakers have labelled it so including the suspension of all activities regarding the sham called national carrier. "The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) must swing into action now that both the upper and lower chambers have declared the project as a fraud. The anti-graft agency must swiftly arrest, investigate and prosecute the ex-minister if found culpable. "There are a lot of questions that Sirika must be made to answer including the whereabouts of the N85 billion splurged on the project. In fact, aside that the so-called national carrier has not secured a single aircraft for its operations, it has also failed to secure Air Operating Certificate (AOC) from the Nigeria Civil Aviation Authority (NCAA). "Sirika must account for the N85 billion taxpayers' fund allegedly wasted on that alleged 'fraud' called national carrier."