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Nigeria: NNPC Audit Report Confirmed U.S.\$18.5 Billion Earnings Not Remitted to Treasury - Sanusi



Photo: Vanguard

(file photo).

Sanusi wrote: "Contrary to the claims of Petroleum Minister Diezani Alison-Madueke, the audit report does not exonerate the NNPC. It establishes that the gap between the company's oil revenues between January 2012 and July 2013 and cash remitted to the government for the same period was \$18.5billion."

Sanusi said the breakdown of the NNPC's account of how it used that money, raises serious questions about the legality of the conduct of the state's oil company.

He said the only thing that is left to be done is for the authority to hold anyone found culpable in these transactions accountable and commence legal proceedings against them since, in his words, "Nigerians did not vote for an amnesty for anyone".

Sanusi said: "The lines of investigation suggested by this audit need to be pursued. Any officials found responsible for involvement in this apparent breach of trust must be charged."

Giving details of what he described as a "scam that violated the constitution" and which he alleged resulted in the siphoning of money from the treasury," and by extension, his suspension as CBN governor, Sanusi said the perpetrators of the exercise relied on the supposed kerosene subsidy purportedly granted by the late President Umaru Yar'Adua.

He pointed out that contrary to that view, the kerosene subsidy had been vacated, going by the statement attributed to the Executive Secretary of the Petroleum Products Pipeline Marketing Company (PPPMC).

His words: " The auditors say a significant part of the unremitted funds is supposed to have gone towards a kerosene subsidy that had been stopped two and a half years earlier by the late President Umaru Yar'Adua. His decree never appeared in the official gazette, leading some to question whether it ever had legal force.

"Evidence disclosed in the report suggests this is a sideshow. The executive secretary of the agency charged with administering subsidies confirmed that, acting on Yar'Adua's orders, it had ceased granting subsidies on kerosene. There was no appropriation for such a subsidy in the 2012 or 2013 budgets," he stated.

He said throughout all this, "Nigerians paid N120-N140 a litre of kerosene, far more than the supposed subsidised price of N50, yet the state oil company withheld \$3.4billion to pay for a subsidy that in effect did not exist".

Sanusi said besides the subsidy matter, he was interested in knowing whether the NNPC remitted to the government the entire proceeds of its crude oil sales, and that if it did not, whether there is proof of the purpose to which the unremitted amounts were applied, as well as ascertaining whether the Corporation has the legal authority to withhold these funds.

Notwithstanding the outcome of the PwC audit report, the President-elect, General Muhammadu Buhari, has said he would revisit the missing \$20billion.

Besides Buhari's pronouncement, other stakeholders and chieftains of the incoming government, have called for an overhaul and restructuring of the nation's oil sector, so as to position it as a revenue earner, as it is applicable in other major oil producing countries in the world

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