Alleged Sexual Harassment: ICPC opens probe into case against FUOYE vice-chancellor

Date: 2025-01-28

Source: https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/770078-alleged-sexual-harassment-icpc-opens-probe-into-case-against-fuoye-vice-chancellor.html

The Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) has commenced probe into the alleged sexual harassment case involving the Vice Chancellor of the Federal University, Oye-Ekiti (FUOYE), Abayomi Fasina, a professor.  
  
The development followed a petition from a coalition of civil society organisations (CSOs) to ICPC. The anti-graft agency received the petition on Monday, 27 January.  
  
Confirming receipt of the petition, Demola Bakare, the spokesperson for the ICPC, told PREMIUM TIMES on Tuesday that the commission had already started taking action on the matter.  
  
“Within 24 hours of the receipt of the petition, necessary actions and strict adherence to the commission’s standard operating procedures have been directed,” Mr Bakare said.  
  
There were also indications on Tuesday that Mr Fasina may soon appear for interrogation on invitation by ICPC, a source at the commission who sought to be anonymous, told our reporter.  
  
The petition was signed by the Gender Mobile Initiative, Baobab for Women’s Human Rights, Education as a Vaccine, BIGIF, BraveHeart Initiative and Hope Behind Bars.  
  
The groups said their intervention was aimed at eradicating gender-based violence and fostering accountability in public institutions.  
  
In the petition, the CSOs demanded transparency, accountability, and justice in the sexual harassment case involving Fasina and a married surbordiate in the university – Folashade Adebayo, who is the Deputy Director at the Directorate of Works and Services at the university.  
  
Mr Fasina was alleged to have pressured and harassed the female staff member for sex.  
  
Ms Adebayo reportedly resisted the VC’s alleged attempts which caused her removal from the office she occupied. She was said to have written a letter to the governing board of the school for intervention.  
  
While calling for an independent investigation into allegations of sexual harassment against Mr Fasina, the CSOs urged the ICPC to ensure justice is served in the matter.  
  
Demands  
  
The petition, submitted on 27 January, was addressed to the ICPC chairperson and copied to key stakeholders, including the Minister of Education, the Attorney General, the Inspector General of Police, and relevant Senate and House Committees.  
  
The petition described the alleged actions of the VC as a “gross abuse of authority, contravention of institutional ethics, and a violation of Nigeria’s legal frameworks on workplace harassment and gender-based violence”.  
  
It expressed a lack of confidence in the panel constituted by the Governing Council given the alleged biases “shinning through the panel’s terms of reference”.  
  
It demanded a thorough and independent investigation by the ICPC into the allegations, protection and support for the victim, including legal, psychological, and social assistance.  
  
It also sought a review of FUOYE’s internal policies on sexual harassment and the implementation of systemic reforms, as well as legislative oversight by relevant Senate and House Committees to address institutional failures in handling sexual harassment cases in Nigeria’s tertiary institutions.  
  
The Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities (SSANU), Western Zone, on Monday, called for the suspension of Mr Fasina, pending the conclusion of investigations into allegations of sexual harassment against him.  
  
In December 2024 the university suspended the chairperson and secretary of the local chapter of SSANU, after accusing them of making the accusations public without evidence and without following through with the university authorities.  
  
The union claimed that the university was attempting to suppress the investigation into the VC’s conduct. Mr Fasina, on the other hand, has demanded a public apology.  
  
However, an audio clip recording of the phone call between Mr Fasina and Mrs Adebayo revealed that the VC indeed pressed her for an illicit relationship.  
  
The university council, in September 2024, invited both parties to a reconciliatory meeting, which ended in a stalemate.