How Natasha accused me of sexual harassment- Reno Omokri

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Reno Omokri, a former presidential aide to ex-President Goodluck Jonathan, has recounted how Kogi Central Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan accused him of sexual harassment.  
  
Mr Omokri’s revelation comes amid the ongoing controversy surrounding a similar allegation she made against Senate President Godswill Akpabio during an interview on Arise Television.  
  
On Saturday, he posted a video on his X page, which he claimed Mrs Akpoti-Uduaghan recorded on 12 October 2021.  
  
According to him, the lawmaker made the allegation in the video while contesting for the Kogi State governorship seat under the umbrella of the Social Democratic Party (SDP).  
  
The 51-year-old stated that she accused him of flirting with her at a state banquet held at the Aso Rock Presidential Villa by then-President Goodluck Jonathan in honour of visiting Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta.  
  
However, in his rebuttal, Omokri denied the claim in a video on his Facebook page Saturday, noting that he was not in Nigeria on the date she mentioned.  
  
He added that Mr Jonathan sent him to the United States as a special envoy to repair Nigeria’s image following the Chibok girls’ abduction.  
  
Mr Omokri said: “On Tuesday, 12 October 2021, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan had a dispute with me, and after the dispute, she went on social media and accused me of sexually harassing her. Now, the thing is, a month before, the Chibok girls were abducted, as one of the president’s spokespersons, Goodluck Jonathan sent me to the United States as a special envoy to try to clean up Nigeria’s image.  
  
“I left in April and was back in Nigeria until the end of May. Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan lied. So what I did was I went on social media and published my passport stamps with my passport leaving Nigeria and then entering the United States showing the stamp. I also published a first-class British Airway ticket showing that I left Nigeria for the United Kingdom and from there to the United States. I wasn’t in Nigeria until Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan accused me.”  
  
Denial  
  
Mr Omokri noted that after he published his evidence in national dailies, Mrs Akpoti-Uduaghan deleted all her accusations across all her social media handles.  
  
“She had made a video insulting me, my wife and my newborn daughter; she also deleted that. The next day, I got a phone call from a prominent Christian clergyman who said they felt that, as a fellow pastor, I’d listen to a member of the body of Christ. The senior member of the body of Christ called me on three ways with Emmanuel Uduaghan, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan’s present husband.  
  
“They appealed to me and quoted scriptural references about Christians taking each other to court. I listened to them and settled the matter out of court, and I was paid a large amount of money as damages, and I let the matter go”, said Mr Omokri.  
  
Detector test  
  
Furthermore, he admitted that he did not know whether the lawmaker’s allegations against Mr Akpabio were true.  
  
However, he emphasised that Mrs Akpoti-Uduaghan’s past actions spoke volumes.  
  
He said: “Four years later, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan had a dispute with Senate President Godswill Akpabio and then went on Arise Television and accused him of sexual harassment, and it sounds like déjà vu, and the thing is, I don’t know if those allegations are true, but one thing I know is that Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan is a liar. So here’s the thing: past behaviour is the best predictor of future behaviours.  
  
“Before Nigeria crucifies Senator Godswill Akpabio, I’d encourage people like Obiageli Ezekwesili and others now agitating to ask Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan to take a lie detector test. One Senator can escort her in her support and one that’s objective or Obiageli Ezekwesili and a third party, maybe someone from CAN, National Supreme Council of Islamic Affairs, or some other objective body, to do the lie detector test.”  
  
Evidence  
  
According to him, Nigerians might have believed the lawmaker if he had not presented evidence.  
  
“If you think about what happened to me and I didn’t have ticket and passport stamps and even videos and pictures of me in the State Department in Washington and later at my son’s school in San Francisco, everybody would have believed that I sexually harassed Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan.  
  
“Because I have evidence she retracted all her false allegations and deleted traces of them. Now, assume I’m lying; just Google Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan accuses Reno Omokri. Just read the facts on Vanguard, Punch, etc. But I don’t know if what she said is true until she takes a lie detector test; the presumption is that she’s acting on her past behaviour”, he added.  
  
This newspaper reported that amid the controversy, the Senate suspended Mrs Akpoti-Uduaghan for six months on February 20 over alleged misconduct and her refusal to comply with the chamber’s sitting arrangement during plenary.  
  
However, the upper chamber stated that if she submitted a written apology, its leadership may consider lifting the suspension before the six-month period expires.