Natasha’s denial of sexual harassment allegation against me, an after thought, says Omokri

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Former presidential aide, Mr Reno Omokri, has dismissed the suspended Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan’s denial of the allegation of sexual harassment against him as a clumsy afterthought that the public should disregard.  
  
  
  
Following Akpoti-Uduaghan’s allegation that the President of the Senate, Senator Godswill Akpabio, had sexually harassed her, Omokri rebutted the accusation, alleging that the senator was prone to making false claims, having previously accused him of the same misdemeanour.  
  
  
  
The senator, representing Kogi Central, responded, insisting that the former presidential aide had indeed made advances towards her during a presidential reception for former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta in 2014.  
  
  
  
However, in an interview published by an online platform on Saturday, Akpoti-Uduaghan retracted her statement, denying that she ever accused Omokri of sexual harassment.  
  
  
  
“I have never accused anyone of sexual harassment apart from Senator Akpabio. I never accused Yahaya Bello of sexual harassment, and I never accused Reno Omokri of sexual harassment,” she told the online platform.  
  
  
  
She explained, “I don’t know if you have the screenshot of the text message that I sent. That was the text message that sparked the entire incident. If Nigerians can go back to the post, it was similar to my response to one of his posts on Facebook in 2019 or 2020.  
  
  
  
“And what I said here was a conversation that occurred when he was attacking one of my wards, who felt bad.  
  
  
  
“That doesn’t amount to sexual harassment.”  
  
  
  
However, Omokri, in a statement on Monday, dismissed Akpoti-Uduaghan’s denial as an extension of falsehood, asserting that the suspended senator had falsely accused him and subsequently made substantial monetary compensation payments.  
  
  
  
He stated, “Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, out of the blue and with no apparent provocation, accused me of sexually harassing her on Tuesday, October 12, 2021, via a Facebook post. Two days later, she accused me of the same offence via a video.  
  
  
  
“Multiple newspapers and websites published her false accusations, and I am surprised yet not shocked by her current denials.”  
  
  
  
Displaying various newspaper websites and YouTube links featuring the Kogi legislator’s accusation, the presidential aide noted that she also claimed he secured contracts for his girlfriends during his tenure under President Goodluck Jonathan.  
  
  
  
Omokri stated, “She said that the incident occurred at a state banquet held on 6 May 2014, for the visiting Kenyan President, Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta.  
  
  
  
“In response to her allegation, I announced a $50,000 reward for anyone who could provide a photograph or video of me at the Uhuru Kenyatta banquet. I subsequently published a first-class British Airways ticket proving that I was in the United States on the date and at the time when she claimed I harassed her. I also published passport stamps that established that Natasha Akpoti, as she was then known, lied against me.  
  
  
  
“After I had done this, Natasha deleted her Facebook post and video accusing me of sexual harassment, but not before I had kept copies.  
  
  
  
“I then phoned my lawyer, Chief Mike Ozekhome SAN. I was preparing to sue Natasha for libel, slander, and defamation when a very prominent Christian cleric called me on a three-way call with Mr Emmanuel Uduaghan, who would later marry Natasha Akpoti.  
  
  
  
“They urged me to let the matter go and provided a large sum to settle the matter out of court, although the word used was that it was an “offering.”  
  
  
  
The money was paid two days after the phone call, and there is both an electronic and a paper trail for the phone call and payment.  
  
  
  
“Let me further state that I have never awarded or influenced the awarding of any contract to any woman in my life, be she a relative, girlfriend, or platonic acquaintance. If Senator Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan possesses evidence to the contrary, then she should, by all means, publish such proof.  
  
  
  
“I am prepared to testify to the above, under oath, in any court of law, Senate hearing, commission of inquiry, or other legally constituted fact-finding body, whether in Nigeria or abroad.  
  
  
  
“Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan is very litigious. If what I have said above is false, then let her sue me. I am a meticulous record keeper and have kept records of what transpired when Natasha Akpoti tried to blackmail me by falsely accusing me of sexual harassment.”  
  
  
  
Akpoti-Uduaghan was suspended by the Senate for breaching its rules following the sexual harassment allegation against Akpabio, which has resulted in multiple lawsuits. Her initial suspension will last for six months, contingent upon her submitting an apology to the Senate.