Akpabio’s wife, Kingibe tackle Natasha over sexual harassment claim

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Akpabio’s wife, Kingibe tackle Natasha over sexual harassment claim  
  
My trouble started after I refused his advances, Kogi senator alleges  
  
Senate President’s wife rallies to hubby’s defence, threatens litigation  
  
My seat has been moved four times, Kingibe faults Akpoti-Uduaghan  
  
The rift between Senate President Godswill Akpabio and the Senator representing Kogi Central, Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan, assumed a new dimension yesterday with claims by the latter that Akpabio had previously made advances to her.  
  
Speaking in an interview on Arise Television, Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan recalled that the incident took place during a visit to Akpabio’s residence in Akwa Ibom State shortly after her emergence as senator.  
  
Alleging that her recent clash with Akpabio in the upper chamber of the National Assembly stemmed from a sexual harassment he previously suffered at the Senate President’s hands, she said: “It all started the day before his birthday and my birthday, because we are birthday mates. We were all in Akwa Ibom.  
  
“At first, we were in his house at Ikot Ekpene. Then we all went to his house in Uyo. Then he held my hands, walking around from room to room, he showed me the beautiful interiors.  
  
“He got to this particular sitting room and asked me if I liked his house. I said of course, sir, every room is beautiful, quality taste.  
  
“He said now you are a senator, I am going to create time for us to come create quality moments here; you will enjoy it.  
  
“At that point, I just pulled away because I didn’t understand what he meant.”  
  
The Kogi senator’s claims, however, struck the wrong chord in Senator Akpabio’s wife, Ekaette, who did not only dismiss the allegation as a figment of Akpoti-Uduaghan’s imagination but also threatened legal action against her.  
  
In an interview with journalists yesterday, Mrs Akpabio described her husband as a disciplined and jovial man, saying that the allegation of sexual harassment leveled against him was fabricated.  
  
The wife of the Senate President insisted that she was present at their residence on December 8, 2023, the date Senator Akpoti-Uduaghan claimed she was sexually harassed.  
  
She said both families enjoy a long-standing cordial relationship predating the senator’s marriage to her husband.  
  
The lawmaker representing the Federal Capital Territory in the Senate, Senator Ireti Kingibe, joined the fray yesterday as she berated her colleague over her outburst against the sitting rearrangement in the upper chamber.  
  
Kingibe, who also appeared on Arise TV yesterday, carpeted the Kogi senator for repeatedly failing to abide by the Senate rules.  
  
Read Also: Natasha accuses Akpabio of making sexual advances at her before husband  
  
She said the other female senators had been quiet on the row provoked by Akpoti-Uduaghan’s reaction to the sitting rearrangement only because they don’t want to say something negative about one of them.  
  
She said: “Silence is golden, especially when one of us is not following the rules.  
  
“As women, we did not want to come out publicly to say anything negative about her, and we were hoping all of this would blow over as a lot of things do.  
  
“The Senate is not a place where we are supposed to fight over trivialities like sitting arrangements.”  
  
She added: “This is about the rules of the Senate. So, if I can point out that other women have been moved several times on that day.  
  
“I wasn’t there, but I gathered that several men were also moved.”  
  
“The truth is, senator Natasha has gotten the most privileges among all four of us (female senators). The seat I sit on now has been moved four times.  
  
“I want women to know we have to follow the rules of the institution we chose to enter, and that is mostly the point of this visit here.”  
  
On the allegations of sexual harassment, Kingibe said she is not that close to Akpabio to discuss the subject.  
  
“I collected some documents for senator Natasha, informed her and went to her house. She told me that she was supposed to discuss something with Akpabio but he said to meet him at a hotel,” Kingibe added.