



Federal Ministry of Justice

MALAMI DEBUNKS REPORT ON NIRSA BY ON-LINE MEDIA

The Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice (HAGF), Abubakar Malami SAN, has deflated the report by Sahara Reporters claiming that he had directed the stoppage of investigation of Nigeria Incentive-based Risk Sharing System for Agricultural Lending (NIRSA). The Special Assistant to the HAGF on Media and Public Relations Dr. Umar Jibrilu Gwandu who disclosed this in a press statement, explained that the online report was baseless and full of falsehood which was spread in order to tarnish the image and hard-earned reputation built by the HAGF over the years.

The Minister pointed that it is pertinent to submit for all intent and purposes that the statement as quoted above does not convey the



mischievous conclusion of stopping of the investigation of NIRSA as portrayed by the Sahara Reporters. He added that his records and directive, quoting verbatim from the letter dated 4th day of February, 2020, reads. "After a careful study of the petition, we found that NIRSA is being investigated by several agencies to wit: the Nigeria Police Force, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), the Independent Corrupt Practices and other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), the State Security Services (SSS), and Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit (NFIU), in respect of the same subject-matter which is not only an unhealthy competition among the agencies of the same Federal Government of Nigeria, but a sheer waste of government resources". Malami further explained. According to him, "in view of the foregoing, you are requested to conclude your own investigation on the

matter and forward the outcome of your investigation to the HAGF's office for legal advice and further necessary action”.

Malami noted that his clear and unambiguous directives was that other several agencies conducting parallel investigation on NIRSAL in respect of the same subject matter should stay action to allow the Nigeria Police Force to continue and conclude the investigations it had started. The directive is by implication of continuation not stoppage of the investigation.

The HAGF also explained that the directive was inspired by the desire to avoid multiplicity, confusion and wastage of scarce resources. After all, only one charge can be competently filed against the entity in respect of the same subject/facts being investigated by the multiple agencies if found wanting at the end of the investigations.

The Minister pointed that the Police, which was directed to take control of the investigation is a body legally recognized and empowered under Section 214(1) and Section 29 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Police Act, respectively.