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MICHAEL OKPARA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE, UMUDIKE

MOUUAU REFUTES ALLEGED SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF DR. PATRICIA ETUNA MBAH

The attention of the Management of Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike (MOUUAU) has been drawn to a malicious, libelous and spurious publication on Page 32 of Thisday Newspaper of Wednesday, January 22, 2020, wherein it was alleged by one Patricia Mbah that she was sexually harassed by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Francis Otunta.

For the avoidance of doubt, there is no Professor Patricia Mbah from the University's records. But we do have Dr. Patricia Mbah.

While the tendentious publication has been referred to the Legal Department of the University for appropriate analysis and due response, the University wishes to state as follows:

1. That Prof. Francis Otunta at no time or place did harass (physically or sexually) the said Dr. Mbah as he has no need to do so.
2. That since his assumption of office as Vice-Chancellor on March 1, 2016, Prof. Otunta has never victimized any staff or demanded any favour from anybody as to warrant his sexually harassing the person.
3. That Dr. Mbah, alongside others, numbering over 100, were properly placed from her previous unmerited position. The Governing Council of the University gave that approval at its 21st Emergency Meeting held from Monday, May 13 to Thursday, May 16, 2019.
4. That the action of the Governing Council was informed by a deluge of petitions against the arbitrary and skewed promotions and appointments carried out by the last administration without regard to extant laws governing same, which the Federal Ministry of Education directed the Governing Council to handle as infractions committed by the Hilary Edeoga administration.
5. That Dr. Mbah's salary was suspended after she travelled abroad and absconded from her duties without due authorization. In line with the rules of the University, her immediate superiors reported her absence from duty.
6. That except Dr. Mbah is no longer a staff of the University; she must subject herself to the extant rules governing her employment, including promotions and discipline.
7. That the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Francis Otunta is ever ready to defend his innocence before any lawful and properly constituted body that either the Governing Council or the Federal Ministry of Education and our own Ministry of Agriculture may deem fit to set up to investigate this unfounded allegation.

Mrs. Jacinta N. Ogwo-Agu (Mrs.)
Registrar & Secretary to Council