



## Federal Ministry of Justice

### **DEFAMATORY PUBLICATIONS: MALAMI VOWS TO TAKE LEGAL ACTION AGAINST SAHARA REPORTERS**

The Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Abubakar Malami, SAN has vowed to take legal action against Sahara Reporters on account of defamatory publications made against him. Malami said, the consequence of the criminal defamation published by Sahara Reporters, has subjected him to considerable distress, psychological trauma, anxiety and greatly injured his character and reputation, which is capable of lowering his estimation in the eyes of right-thinking persons in the society. The Minister's Spokesperson, Dr. Umar Gwandu disclosed this in a statement issued from the Office of the HAGF, Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 in Abuja.

He said series of prejudicial articles/materials were published by Sahara Reporters Incorporation, which were adverse against him disparaged his reputation via its online internet platform and broadcast on the internet via the Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp and other similar



Social Media platforms where same could be viewed and assessed by the whole world and further shared and/or disseminated virally without restraint. He noted particularly that on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2020, Sahara Reporters, in what appears like a coordinated attack, viciously wrote and maliciously published libelous and criminally defamatory articles against his personality. "It is pertinent to note that the publications were untrue, fabrication or at best a figment of imagination of Sahara Reporters and are unsupported howsoever. He said since the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 2020 when the defamatory articles was first published, he has been receiving several telephone calls and visits from well-meaning Nigerians,

his friends, well-wishers and associates from all over the world including those he has dealt with/still dealing with in his Official Capacity as Nigeria's Chief Law Officer, many of whom have expressed serious concerns over the publication" He stressed.

He expressed that on the premise of the foregoing and given that the publication of malicious libel and criminal defamation published against him by Sahara Reporters, was with a view to disparage him in the eyes of right thinking persons, contrary to Nigerian Criminal and Penal Laws and a gross violation of his Right to Dignity of Human Person, as guaranteed under the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (As amended).

Malami therefore, gave a -7 day ultimatum to retract all the libelous and criminally defamatory publications against him, and issue a public apology to be published on the platform and on front pages of three national newspapers for three consecutive days. He warned that failure to retract the publication in question and offer the requested apology within the stipulated time, a Senior Lawyer has already been briefed to deal with the matter as may be appropriate.