

13 March 2018

To: The CEO of AFRINIC, M. Alan Barrett
To: The Council of Elders
To: The Board of AFRINIC
CC: Legal Adviser of AFRINIC, M. Ashok Radhakisson
CC: HR of AFRINIC, M.Yavisht Toolseeya

Re: COMPLAIN FOR HARASSMENT IN WORK ENVIRONMENT AT AFRINIC

As an employee, and having been loyal to the organization for 7 years with impactful deliverables: I have raised more than one million dollars (1,000,000\$) for AFRINIC, launched the Fund for Internet Research and Education, scale-up both the AFRINIC Government Working Group and the External Relations Department, and many other projects in AFRINIC.

As a Head, as a Woman, I feel profoundly insulted, attacked and disrespected because of a personal vendetta from Patrisse Deesse, Sunday Folayan, Haytham Nakal, and other people.

I have attached ONLY PARTS of all the proofs that I have been able to gather in ANNEXES I TO IV, APPENDED AS PROOF OF CHARGES.

There is a will to get rid of me as a staff from some members of the AFRINIC Board and Patrisse Deesse, that have harassed me morally. The said Board Members have formulated personal attacks based on "people telling them" "false allegations" they have without any counter explanations or investigations to get a neutral view of the situation.

The same Board Members and Patrisse Deesse have been bad-mouthing on me and plotting against me, they have threatened the CEO, M. Alan Barrett and have clearly manipulated Alan Barrett to side with them in this revenge against me to get me out of AFRINIC.

This is because I am a Woman, a Francophone, a Minority, and because I supported some African Organisations in the Internet Ecosystem. I have been penalized and harassed for many years because I have never accepted to be involved in dirty politics even if I was constantly solicited because of my strategic position inside AFRINIC and lastly also because I have never responded positively to indecent propositions of some of the above-mentioned.

I am now asking for an investigation to be done, as I need:

- my name to be clean;
- formal excuses as I have been treated as a criminal;
- and I am asking for compensation for all the unfair harassment that I have been exposed to for many years because of personal vendetta.

1. COMPLAIN AGAINST M. PATRISSE DEESSE, DIRECTOR FINANCE AT AFRINIC FOR MORAL, SEXUAL HARRASSMENT AND PLOTTING

I, Vymala Poligadu, the Head of External Relations of AFRINIC, am lodging an official complaint against Patrisse Deesse, Director of Finance and former acting CEO of AFRINIC, for Moral and Sexual Harassment.

Patrisse Deesse since the past six years I have been in AFRINIC, has always made personal attacks using sometimes sexual connotations to me.

He is someone who is constantly bad-mouthing on me and others that he does not appreciate, constantly plotting and he has the power to make a staff life miserable in AFRINIC. Either you are his friend or you are his enemy.

During a conversation on the budget and in front of a witness, Wayne Gurunaden, Accounting Assistant, Patrisse Deesse told me **"where do you want to find the budget, in my Pubic hair?"** he accompanied these words with a rude gesture.

I was shocked and left the office, deeply insulted that a Director could allow himself to say such kind of disrespectful words to me. This was NOT the first time. Patrisse Deesse has many times bullied and harassed me morally. He is very rude and because of his position in AFRINIC, I always keep quiet as I know that I will have troubles.

I informed HR of this verbally (I cannot recall the date). I finally also informed the CEO during my Performance Appraisal on 30 January 2018 too. I told the CEO that AFRINIC was an Organisation that was not considerate of women and that this culture should change.

There is other Staff who are harassed, bullied and diminished every day. However, everyone is afraid because of his position and because he is protected by Sunday Folayan and he has the support of Haytham Nakhal as he was the one chosen as Acting CEO, there is a reference to this clearly in **ANNEX II**.

Patrisse Deesse also has the ears of Sunday Folayan and Haytham Nakal to harass me and make me fire: **(PLEASE REFER TO ANNEX II)**.

2. COMPLAIN AGAINST AFRINIC BOARD MEMBERS, M. SUNDAY FOLAYAN, CHAIRMAN OF AFRINIC BOARD AND HYTHAM EL-NAKHAL, VICE CHAIR OF AFRINIC BOARD FOR SEXUAL, MORAL HARASSMENT, BULLY AND PLOTTING

I, Vymala Poligadu, the Head of External Relations of AFRINIC, am lodging an official complaint against Sunday Folayan and Hytham El-Nakal actual AFRINIC Board Members for defamation and moral harassment.

I have been harassed for many years by former AFRINIC Board Members too. I am constantly bullied, diminished and harassed by some Members of the AFRINIC Board. They have misogyny and indecent connotations comments that is very disrespectful to me as a Woman.

This has also been reported to the CEO of AFRINIC, M. Alan Barrett. I have also raised this many times with the HR of AFRINIC and my Colleagues of AFRINIC.

Miss Nadege Gaju, former PR & Marketing Manager of AFRINIC has given me permission to share the document attached showing that Sunday Folayan, Patrisse Deesse and other people were plotting to fire me. She told me that she is now safe and that I need to make the truth come-out to stop this toxic culture at AFRINIC and to demonstrate that the Moral and Sexual harassment does exist in AFRINIC.

She has screen shots of all the conversations that M. Sunday Folayan was assaulting her sexually and I have attached few of them. **PLEASE REFER TO ANNEX V.**

Sunday Folayan was bullying her and threatening her if she does not cooperate he will fire her just like he will make fire Vymala. To prove his power, he sent her screen shots of conversations he had with Alan Barrett and Haytham Nakal, on the plotting to fire me. The name of Patrisse Deesse was raised as he is instrumental to this vendetta. **PLEASE REFER TO ANNEX I.**

Sunday Folayan also shared conversation he had with the CEO on Mukom Tamon. Sunday Folayan said he is untouchable stating: "I can place anyone I want as COO. I can also fire anyone starting by the CEO and I keep threatening the CEO without him saying anything, he is my Muppet". **PLEASE REFER TO ANNEX III.**

Sunday Folayan and Haytham Naikhal make a reference to Andrew Alston also wanting to get rid of me since 2016. **PLEASE REFER TO ANNEX II.**

Some of the AFRINIC Board Members keep interfering in AFRINIC Operations. They talk about the Francophones as the trouble makers in a very clear degrading way. They also refer to the AIS Sponsorship in Kenya. **PLEASE REFER TO ANNEX II.**

My health has been affected by this continuous harassment at work since the past three years, and I had to take medications against anxiety, depression and insomnia. I have all the medical report of the Doctor on this.

I am reiterating my formal complaint and in addition requesting a deep investigation, to interrogate all the employees to get more cases of these unprofessional and dictatorship behaviors.

I am thus requesting a thorough and neutral investigation. No more Staff in AFRINIC should feel pressured, harassed, bullied, sexually assaulted and diminished by any Board Members, any Executive or by anyone else disregard of his position.

We need to stop this Culture in AFRINIC.
Again I count on your unwavering support on this.

Sincerely,



Vymala Poligadu

"In justice I Believe, In God I trust"

PS: I have in my possession many more information that I will share during the investigations.

In ANNEX IV, Miss Nadege GAJU gives me her full consent to use all these information.

ANNEX I

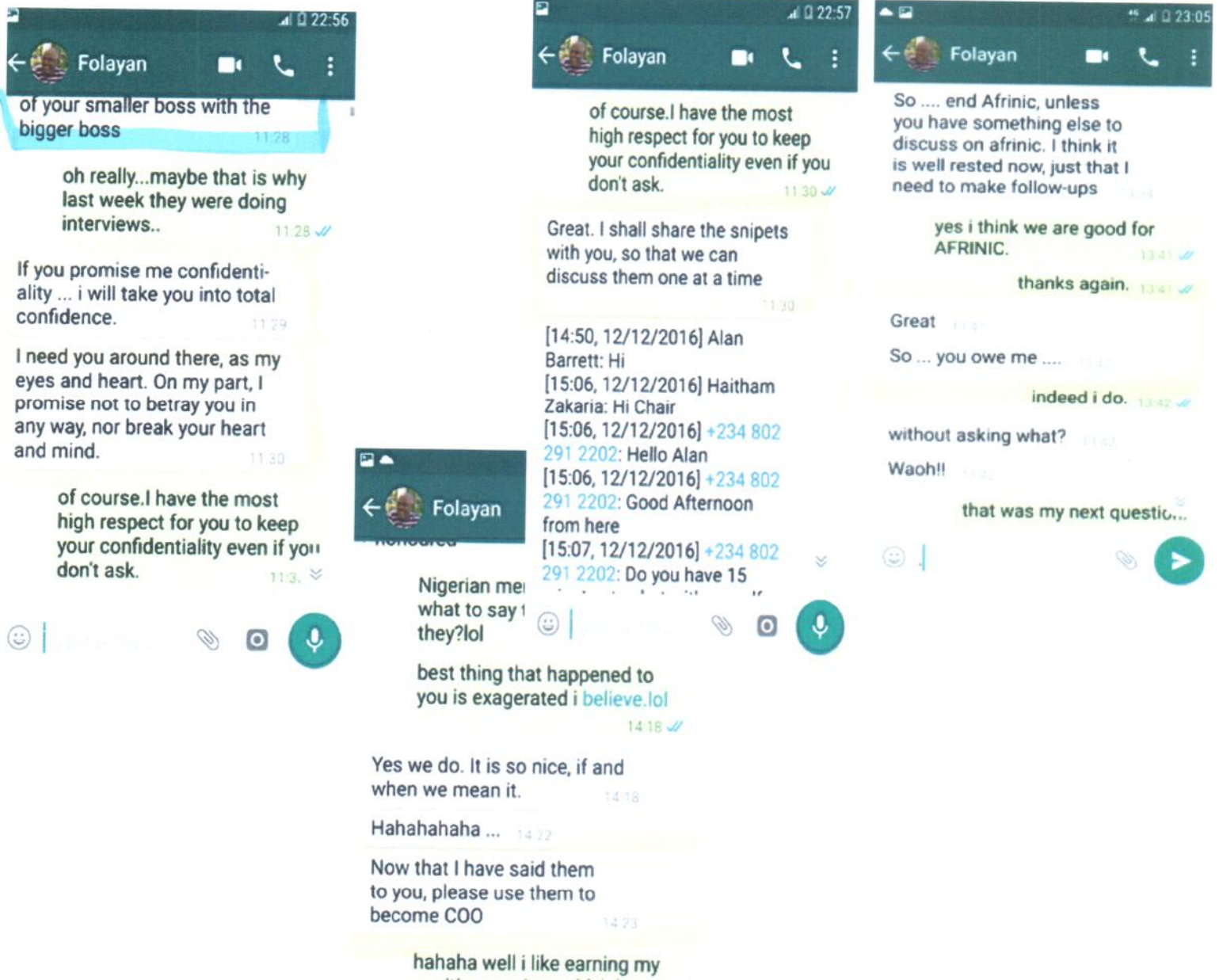
CONVERSATION SHARED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF AFRINIC, M. SUNDAY FOLAYAN TO MISS NADEGE GAJU:

In this conversation M. Sunday Folayan wanted to show Miss Nadege Gaju that he will fire me, Vymala Poligadu from AFRINIC, and she should now be faithful to him as he has his own spies in AFRINIC.

This has started since 2016 when she joined AFRINIC, he was telling her "I will make you be the Head of Comms as it is Vymala who is Acting Head of Communications and I will make her fire".

To prove his "untouchable" position he sent her screen shots of conversations with Alan Barrett, Haytham Nakal and himself clearing asking the CEO to fire me because I was not competent.

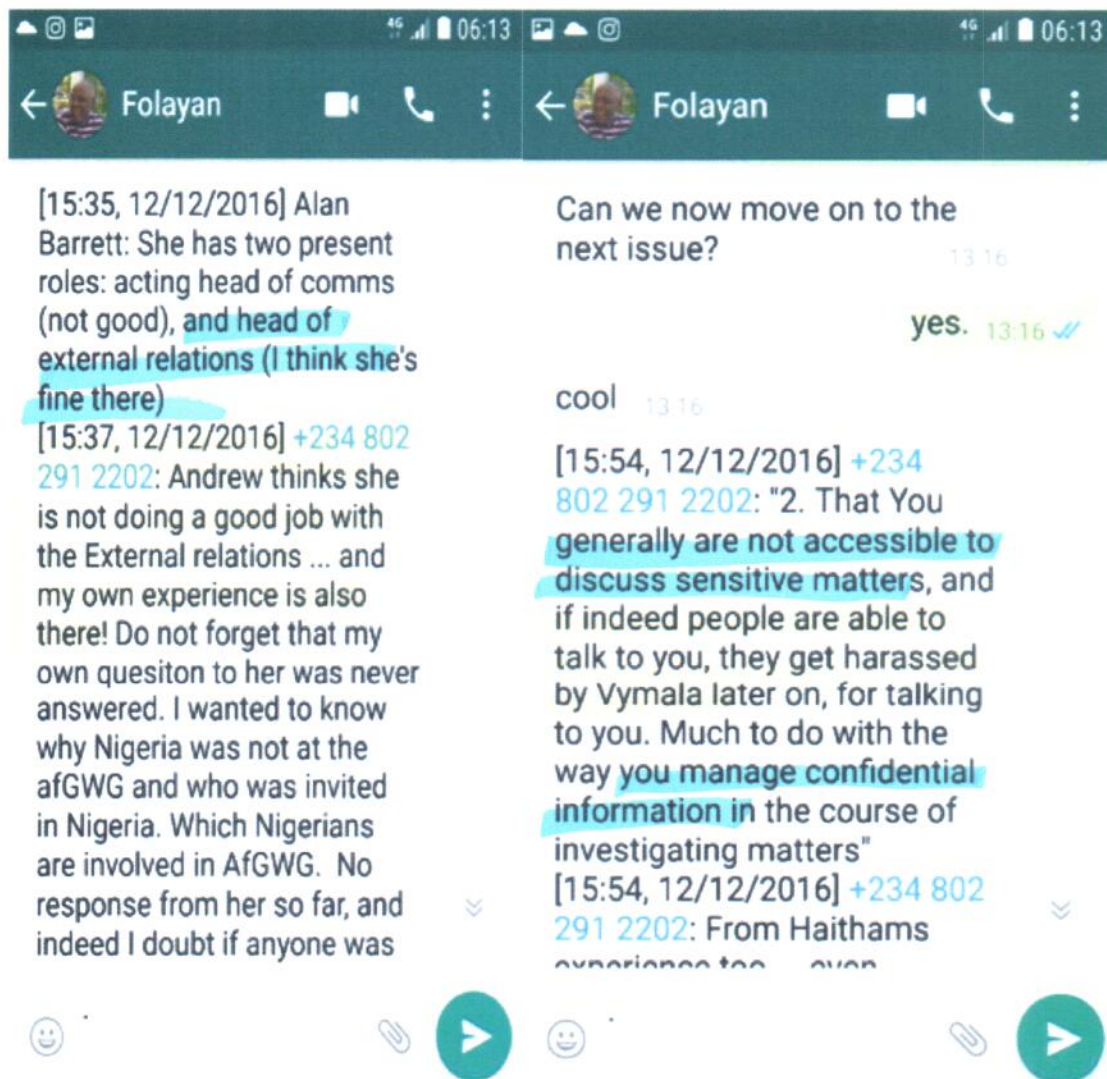
He send her evidence (screenshots) of his conversation with Alan Barrett, and Haytham Nakhal and told her that Patrisse Deesse was also looking for proofs to fire me".



ANNEX II

This conversation is a clear, with directed personal attack to me as the Head of External Relations and Acting Head of Communications by Sunday Folyan, Haitham Nakhal and Patrisse Deesse. All those defamations are based on false allegations, without investigations using a neutral process to have the truth, facts and a way forward,

It also demonstrates that Sunday Folyan keeps interfering in Operational Matters threatening Alan Barrett and clearing flagging him and giving him directives on how to manage AFRINIC.





291 2202: I must let you know that she is very crafty. Crafty staff will make suggestions to you, get you to agree, and then turn around to tell the staff that it was your idea in the first place.

[15:59, 12/12/2016] Alan

Barrett: I haven't noticed that particular issue, but I have seen other cases of crafty behaviour

[16:00, 12/12/2016] +234

802 291 2202: I think she has made the staff believe that you will always follow her suggestions. I also see it in the way she was making changes around protocol issues during the meeting. I even heard you complaining in Mauritius



Barrett: Yes, I am worried

[15:56, 12/12/2016] +234 802

291 2202: The first step to this is **Never discuss staff matters with Vymala**, without HR being present

[15:56, 12/12/2016] Alan

Barrett: ok

[15:56, 12/12/2016] +234

802 291 2202: Second, **Never discuss matters with Vymala, in the presence of the person** who told you about the issue

[15:57, 12/12/2016] +234 802

291 2202: I also think when Vymala comes to discuss issues with you, never give an answer immediately, especially if it is too trivial.

[15:57, 12/12/2016] Alan

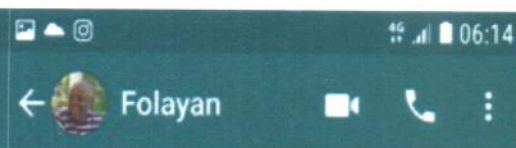
Barrett: that's a good idea





[15:35, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: She has two present roles: acting head of comms (not good), and head of external relations (I think she's fine there)

[15:37, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Andrew thinks she is not doing a good job with the External relations ... and my own experience is also there! Do not forget that my own question to her was never answered. I wanted to know why Nigeria was not at the afGWG and who was invited in Nigeria. Which Nigerians are involved in AfGWG. No response from her so far, and indeed I doubt if anyone was



with it. It is deliberately done to make it look like she runs the company and not you. indeed, this was told to one of the staff and the staff was not pleased with it.

[16:03, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I don't like giving warnings, but this may warrant such a step. Next time I notice.

[16:05, 12/12/2016] +234 802

291 2202: iThat is a waste of time Alan. It will only make a mockery of you. Deal with it. Ask for the protocol sheet. Let her assign the role of MC to another staff, even if it is a junior staff with good command of English and French. In all, devolve actions from her,



[14:50, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: Hi

[15:06, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: Hi Chair

[15:06, 12/12/2016] [+234 802 291 2202](#): Hello Alan

[15:06, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Good Afternoon from here

[15:07, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Do you have 15 minutes to chat with myself and Haitham?

[15:07, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: sure

[15:07, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Ok.

[15:08, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: First of all, We both have a lot of respect for you, and will continue to support you and all your efforts

[15:08, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: Definitely

[15:08, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: We subscribe to minimum interference in the way you run things and will continue to assist as much as we can

[15:09, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: thanks

[15:09, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: We also will want to ensure that you did not end up in a situation where you are managing crises, instead of concentrating on your work

[15:10, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Some Staff discontentment is beginning to build up around you and Vymala in the office, and we want to see how we can assist you, before things turn into a crises.

[15:11, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: It will not be easier for all of us, if your staff begin to contact Board members, and also if the Francos and the trouble-makers begin to peddle unsubstantiated information regarding happenings in AfriNIC Ltd.

[15:12, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: You seem to have heard things that I haven't heard

[15:12, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Three things:

[15:13, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: 1. The way and manner that Vymala was appointed to her current position. There is the believe that due process was not done, as the position was not made open to be contested for. There is the belief that if this was done, she is not the most competent to occupy the position.

[15:15, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: 2. That You generally are not accessible to discuss sensitive matters, and if indeed people are able to talk to you, they get harassed by Vymala later on, for talking to you. Much to do with the way you manage confidential information in the course of investigating matters

[15:16, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: 3. That Vymala may currently be handling some sensitive recruitment process and that there is the belief that people she does not like will not make the shortlist.

[15:17, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Haitham, please correct me if I got the summary of the issues wrong

[15:18, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Our Goal is to help you navigate and

prevent a crises from brewing and blowing into the open, but there is the gist of the issues.

[15:18, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: 1. It's true that the position was not advertised, but I discussed it with other senior staff before implementing.

[15:20, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: 2. I believe that I am accessible to discuss anything. I don't know about Vymala harassing people.

[15:20, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: Unfortunately i heard that from many different people in staff

[15:20, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: 3. I had asked Vymala to prepare a shortlist of candidates for head of comms, but I later reasised my mistake and am not continuing sown that path.

[15:21, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Which means it could be true Alan.

[15:21, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I can easily believe it, but nobody had told me

[15:21, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Should this not be best done by HR?

[15:21, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: yes, HR should do it

[15:22, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Maybe we should take each of the three issues and discuss them, so that we can bolt them down and chart a way forward Alan

[15:22, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: ok

[15:22, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I appreciate the advice

[15:22, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: "1. The way and manner that Vymala was appointed to her current position. There is the believe that due process was not done, as the position was not made open to be contested for. There is the belief that if this was done, she is not the most competent to occupy the position."

[15:24, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: How do you plan to redress that? Especially when you need to balance functionality of the organization and transparency of your own actions

[15:26, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I believed at the time that that there was no barrier to my making any appointments, and not requirement for advertising. I still believe that. Advertising is often a good idea, bit not required.

[15:27, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: Who is perceived as better for the position of external relations?

[15:27, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: I think even if this is the case, you can still do an Internal Advert, if you do not want to do an external advert

[15:28, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Your Logic at that, is the same logic that will have made us confine the search of the AFRINIC CEO to existing staff only. I think you have made a wrong assumption there.

[15:29, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: Yes, if I was looking for somebody to fill that position, I would have advertised.

[15:29, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Your assumption is that she is the best that can do the job, but the truth is that there may be others within and outside who can do better

[15:32, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I think Vymala is not good as acting head of comms, and some of the things you have heard may be related to that, rather

than to head of external relations.

[15:33, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I also thought Gaelle was neglecting the relationships with other organisations

[15:33, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: For both and also for harnesses

[15:33, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: This agrees with the views of some Board members, including Andrew who really took time to discuss the staff presentations with me, and his views.

[15:33, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Moving forward, what do we need to do, to restore confidence in Staff.

[15:34, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: Andrew was in direct contact with her for liquid sponsorship

[15:34, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I think that hiring a good head of comms will help a lot. I would like to use an agency.

[15:34, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Would you ask her to revert to her previous position if she is not effective at the present role? You can then advertise and if she is still interested, let her apply

[15:35, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Cool

[15:35, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: She has two present roles: acting head of comms (not good), and head of external relations (I think she's fine there)

[15:37, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Andrew thinks she is not doing a good job with the External relations ... and my own experience is also there!

[15:40, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: I also was part of discussion regarding sponsorship of AIS-Kenya. you need to keep your eyes open Alan, and not allow your good works be diluted by the incompetence of those you trust.

[15:41, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: There is the possibility of restructuring in Jan/Feb

[15:41, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: Yes, based on what happened with Liquid telecom

[15:42, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: If you ask me, I think you should let HR evaluate and you just review. You are vulnerable and it will be hard to please everyone, but as Boss, you must be seen to be fair and firm. For now, Vymala seems to make people see you as biased towards her

[15:43, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I try to be fair to all, but perceptions of bias do arise

[15:43, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: Sorry to name one but even Patrisse is worrying from her harnessment

[15:44, 12/12/2016] Haitham Zakaria: I was talking with him in af25 and he alluded to that

[15:44, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: I think the problem is that you take decisions as boss instead of working based on recommendations of your managers. a 360 degree evaluation will show you that Vymala is not measuring up amongst the heads. If that is the case, people are setting you up to fail Alan.

[15:45, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: ok

[15:45, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: I would want you to concentrate on

your great job of moving Afrinic forward instead of involving yourself in staff political matters. It is not pretty to do in any organization and I can advise you of how to effectively deal with it.

[15:46, 12/12/2016] Alan Barrett: I wish I didn't have to deal with staff political matters. Thank you for the offer of advice.

[15:47, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: Please take some concrete steps to restore confidence of your loyal staff, and there are many of them.

[15:48, 12/12/2016] +234 802 291 2202: The decision to make Patrisse interim CEO was not pretty to Adiel, but it held AFRINIC until you came. we could not have gone begging for Alain to be interim CEO.

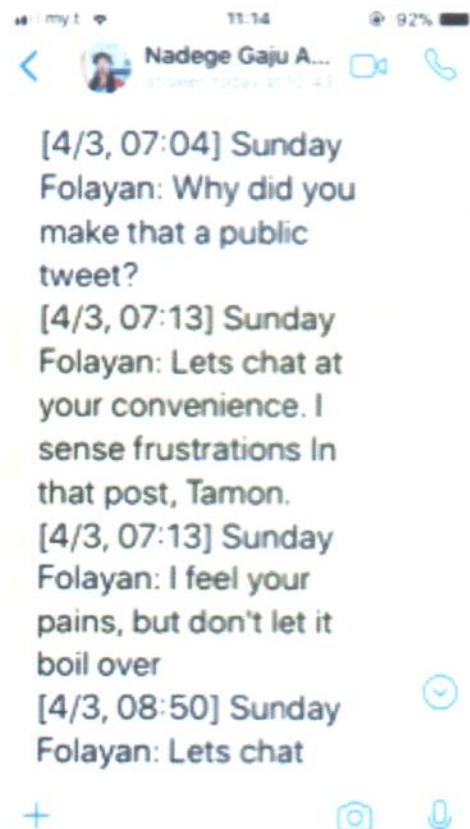
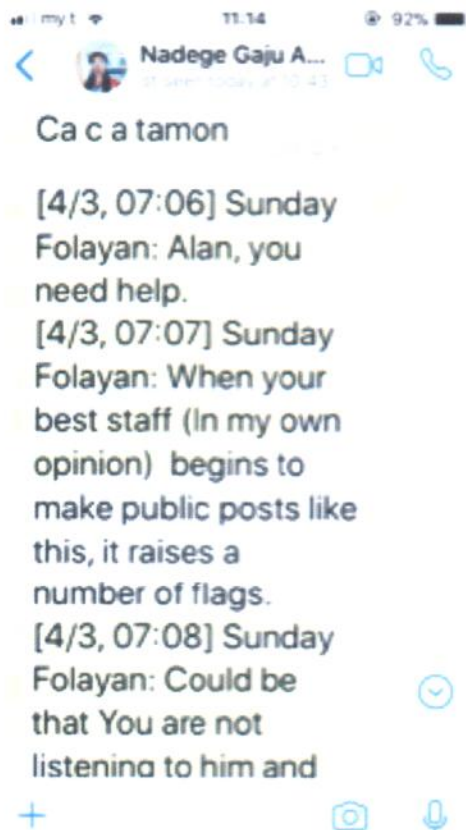
ANNEX III

SCREEN SHOT OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN:

1) SUNDAY FOLAYAN AND ALAN BARRETT AGAIN LECTURING HIM ABOUT OPERATIONAL MATTERS.

These were sent to Nadege Gaju by Sunday Folayan to show her the power he has over the CEO and that he is the one managing AFRINIC. I have the permission of Nadege Gaju to share this public.

It demonstrates here again that Sunday Folayan manages the AFRINIC Operation pressuring Alan Barrett and giving him directives on how to manage AFRINIC in secret and not letting any other Board Members aware of this situation except Haytham Nakhal.



[4/3, 07:04] Sunday Folayan: Why did you make that a public tweet?

[4/3, 07:13] Sunday Folayan: Lets chat at your convenience. I sense frustrations In that post, Tamon.

[4/3, 07:13] Sunday Folayan: I feel your pains, but don't let it boil over

[4/3, 08:50] Sunday Folayan: Lets chat when you can Tamon.

1) AND SUNDAY FOLAYAN AND ALAN BARRETT AGAIN LECTURING HIM ON OPERATIONAL MATTERS.

[4/3, 07:06] Sunday Folayan: Alan, you need help.

[4/3, 07:07] Sunday Folayan: When your best staff (In my own opinion) begins to make public posts like this, it raises a number of flags.

[4/3, 07:08] Sunday Folayan: Could be that You are not listening to him and you have a couple of broken processes

[4/3, 07:08] Sunday Folayan: Available to help, before it becomes a major problem

[4/3, 07:08] Sunday Folayan: That is, if it is not already a major problem

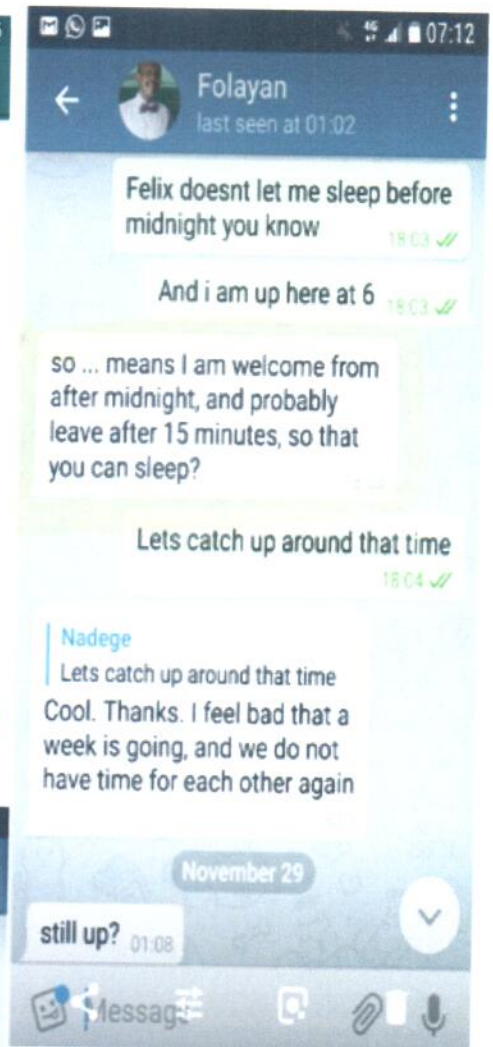
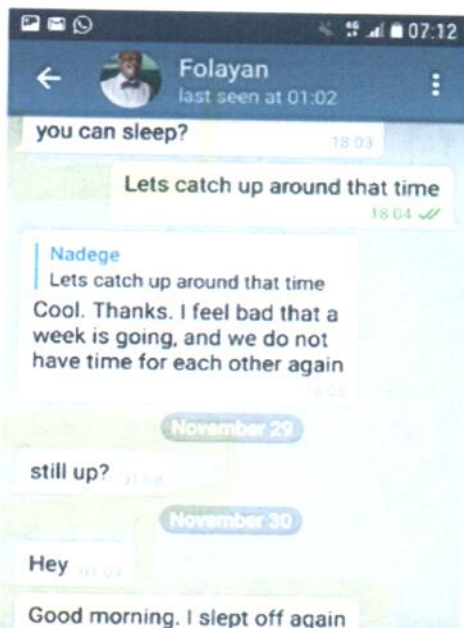
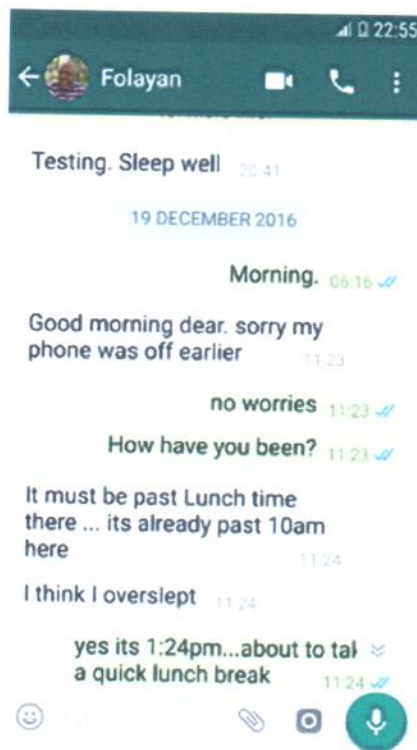
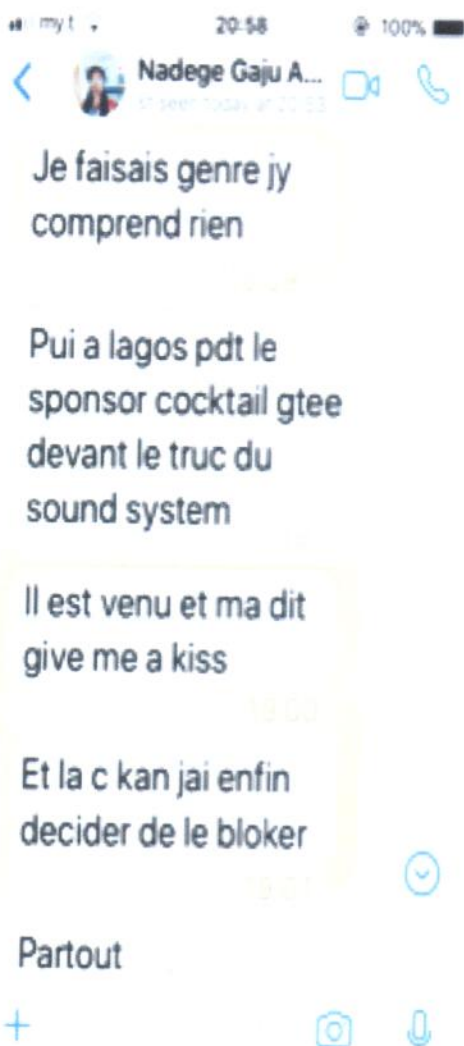
[4/3, 07:09] Sunday Folayan: You know I dont like interferred, but you could also use my and Haithams experience without anyone knowing.

[4/3, 07:10] Sunday Folayan: At your convenience, lets explore how to remedy things.

ANNEX IV

PERMISSION OF NADEGE GAJU TO SHOW THE HARASSMENT THAT EXIST IN AFRINIC

During AFRINIC-27, in November 2017 in Nigeria, Sunday Folayan was harassing Nadege Gaju as during all AFRINIC meeting, but this time, Nadege was really scared as it was in Nigeria in his own country, and he told Nadege, "I have much power here, Beware!". Sunday Folayan kept inviting himself in her room, and she was saying that she needs to work very late and wake up very early.



my t 20:59 100% my t 3G 09:05 83%

Nadege Gaju A...
st seen today at 20:53

18:45 ✓
Si tu dis ok moi je
fonces et je dis que tu
m'as donné la
permission d'utiliser
toutes ces
informations

You

Je te redemande Miss
Nadege Gaju tu es sûre
que tu veux foncer et p...

Je veux juste porter
plainte contre afrinic

+ camera microphone

my t 3G 09:05 83% my t 3G 09:06 83%

Nadege Gaju A...
st seen today at 09:05

December 2016 who
was constantly trying
to find ways to sleep
with me. He harrassed
me for more than a
year and i finally
blocked him when i
couldn't take it
anymore. Then they
brought Felix who first
made me understand
he wanted me to be
his apprentice until he
started treating me
like his
secretary, sending me

+ camera microphone

Nadege Gaju A...
st seen today at 09:05

I had to quit that [job.it](#)
was no environment
for a woman. It started
when i noticed how
Patrisse was
harrassing you, that
comment on pubic
hair was jus shocking
and how he was
constantly
badmouthing about
you and plotting
against you all the
time. Then we had the
chair of AFRINIC in

+ camera microphone

my t 3G 09:06 83%

Nadege Gaju A...
st seen today at 09:06

secretary, sending me
rude msgs and emails
when i was sick. He
became very
demanding of me,
wanting me to make
all travels with him,
getting mad if i was
talking to other
workmates and
isolating me. I fell sick
all the time cause i
was stressed had a
nervous breakdown in
the office and the
next day he wanted to

+ camera microphone