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## **IES-COPEC JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

21<sup>st</sup> February 2024, Accra

### **THE NATIONAL PETROLEUM AUTHORITY (NPA) PLAYING SOFT WITH SENTUO OIL REFINERY TO THE DETRIMENT OF CONSUMERS AND THE STATE**

It has come to the notice of the Institute for Energy Security (IES) and the Chamber for Petroleum Consumers (COPEC) that the Chinese Sentuo Oil Refinery have placed on the Ghanaian fuel market unwholesome petroleum product in contravention of national fuel specifications, and all laid down regulations, licenses and permits pertaining to the country's downstream petroleum market, of which the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) is the regulator.

The out-of-specification products are reported as causing damage to vehicles and machinery with key oil marketing brands struggling to find ways to dislodge of these products, with some compelled to shut down dispensing pumps, while the NPA looks on helpless.

These worrying developments by the Sentuo Oil Refinery in pumping sub-standard products unto the Ghanaian market, if left to continue could see a surge in malfunctioning engines particularly in the Greater Accra, Ashanti, and the three Northern regions as a larger bulk of these bad products are believed to have been trucked to these regions.

In line with the provision of the NPA Act 2005 (Act 691), the Licensing Department of NPA as part of its mandates is enjoined to issue permits and licenses to various Petroleum Service Providers (PSPs) that reflects the activities covered within a specified service area, and also to maintain a register on licenses and permits issued to various categories of PSPs.

However, the IES and COPEC can confirm that aside the construction permit granted the Chinese Sentuo Oil refinery, no other license have been issued to warrant Sentuo to commence oil processing, trading, and marketing; in clear contravention of established national laws and acts.

The Sentuo Oil Refinery as IES and COPEC have it today, has failed to collaborate with the Inspection and Monitoring Department of the NPA to acquire the necessary permits, and develop the necessary checklists for the inspection of the refinery facility, yet last month His Excellency the President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo joyously proceeded to commission the refinery, even as the state oil refinery is left in its ailing and distressed state.

Meanwhile, the NPA's own rules suggest that "a person shall not engage in a business or commercial activity in the downstream industry unless that person has been granted a license for that purpose by the Board." The IES and COPEC are struggling to understand how the Sentuo Oil Refinery side-stepped laid down rules, commenced oil production and trading without the requisite licenses and permits from the National Petroleum Authority.

Some recent development, and happenings over the past few years surrounding the country's oil refinery sector gives impetus to the idea that government is working for foreign interests, as against national interests which bears direct positive impact on the economy and citizenry.

To maintain the sanctity of the downstream petroleum sector, the IES and COPEC call on the NPA to move swiftly to shut down the Sentuo Oil Refinery in the interest of fuel consumers and the state at large. The NPA must do so unless it can published for the consumption of Ghanaians all relevant permits and licenses issued to Sentuo, that warrant their continued operation and activities.

The IES and COPEC call on the Special Prosecutor to investigate the activities of the Sentuo Oil Refinery leading up to unspecified and sub-standard petroleum products finding their way into the Ghanaian petroleum market.

The IES and COPEC also calls on His Excellency the President to dedicate to the Tema Oil Refinery (TOR) the same time and energy as it is doing for Sentuo, even though it has not acquired all necessary permits and licenses to operate in the oil refinery and marketing space, resulting in out-of-specification products seeping into the Ghanaian market.

Finally, the IES and COPEC wish to serve notice that they will not hesitate to equally drag the Ghana Standard Authority (GSA) and the National Petroleum Authority to the law courts in the coming days if the current menace is not immediately addressed.



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**Signed:**

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