

**RESPONSE BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE
PANEL ON OIL THEFT/LOSSES IN NIGERIA, MAJOR GENERAL
BT NDIOMU (RTD), AT THE INAUGURATION OF THE PANEL
HELD AT THE OFFICE OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER,
ABUJA, ON TUESDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2022**

Protocol,

Let me begin by expressing the gratitude of members of the Panel for the rare opportunity to serve Nigeria in this capacity. We consider this assignment very important. Its importance is elaborated by the damage to the economy as illustrated by the National Security Adviser. To be saddled with the responsibility of partly, reversing the ugly trend of the southwards trajectory of the fortunes of the major source of Government revenue, is very rare. For this reason, we remain eternally grateful to the National Security Adviser and to the President, Commander-in-Chief of the armed Forces, His Excellency, Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR, for selecting us from hundreds of millions of Nigerians who could as well have been chosen to carry out this onerous task.

2. NSA, from all indications regarding the profile of members, I have no doubt in my mind that the Panel will discharge its assignment dispassionately, professionally, and without fear or favour.

3. The expertise at the disposal of each individual on the Panel is sufficient and will place us at the right stead to fulfil the objectives of setting up the Panel. We shall leave no stone unturned by digging deep to unravel not only the incidences of oil theft/losses but, pre-disposition and causative factors as well as groups and individuals responsible for the criminal enterprise.

NSA, Distinguished Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

4. The task assigned to the members of this Panel is enormous as it requires painstaking scrutiny of the whole gamut of crime being perpetrated against the Federal Republic of Nigeria in the oil sector, which has over the years, undermined the economy and national security. I assure you NSA, that members of this Panel will justify the confidence reposed on them by working assiduously round the clock to carry out the assignment effectively and efficiently. We are determined to work towards uncovering the clandestine activities of individuals, groups or agencies, as the case may be, as they relate to oil theft/losses. We shall propose time-tested recommendations classifying the recommendations into Short, Medium and Long Term perspectives to aid implementation especially, given some of the fundamental changes that will be necessary to frontally, tackle the menace as well as the period left in the lifespan of this Administration.

Ladies and Gentlemen

5. Conversely, let me use this opportunity to appeal to members of this Panel to get prepared to work towards meeting the deadline given to complete the assignment. I am optimistic and confident that the deadline is achievable and will be met.

NSA, Distinguished Members, Ladies and Gentlemen

6. As the period given for the task is short, let me keep this response short so we can get to work immediately. I therefore, once again, thank the National Security Adviser for considering us worthy to carry out this very important National assignment. We shall work hard to make you proud not least, for the confidence reposed on us.

7. Thank you for your attention. God bless you and God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Special Investigative Panel on Oil Theft/Losses in Nigeria

6th December, 2022