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Gold exporter sacks Kaijuka as board chairman

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KAMPALA. The African Gold Refinery (AGR) has dropped former Energy minister Richard Kaijuka as their board chairman, accusing him of abuse of authority and misuse of company assets, *Sunday Monitor* has learnt.

Mr Kaijuka was dismissed by the Entebbe based AGR board of directors in mid-November after finding out that his contact could not be tolerated in the growth of the company.

AGR is a Ugandan-based company engaged in processing of and trading in gold within the East African region.

In a press statement issued on behalf of the AGR board of directors by Ms Christine Atwine, the office manager, Mr Kaijuka is accused of "plunging the company into unnecessary expenses."

"AGR has zero tolerance towards those who do not abide by our corporate ethics, whether committed by top management, employees at any other level, business partners, clients or customers. A major example of

this is the Board of Director's decision to terminate Mr Richard Kaijuka's tenure as board chairman of AGR," the press statement reads in part.

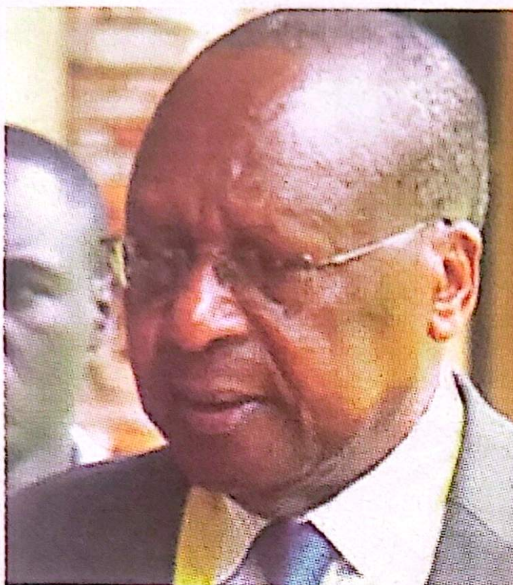
Mr Kaijuka, who acknowledges receipt of the sacking letter, denied any wrongdoing because 'he had no authority over the issuance of cheques by the company.'

"I am shocked that AGR can make such rubbishing statements. I do not sit in office and I have no authority to write cheques to withdraw the said

money. And if I abused office to receive the said money, why would the chief executive officer sign to authorise payments?" Mr Kaijuka asked.

Mr Kaijuka said his dismissal was also made without prior meetings to discuss the accusations.

"I really wonder how they do their things because I just saw a letter dismissing me and yet we have never sat to discuss such accusations. However, I have contributed a lot for AGR. Since we started, we have exported



HE SAYS...

Allegations.

Mr Kaijuka acknowledges receipt of the sacking letter but denies any wrongdoing.

No warning.

He says he was dismissed before the accusations were discussed.

Sacked. Richard Kaijuka.

PHOTO BY JESSICA SABANO

gold worth billions of dollars," he said.

But the AGR, among others, accuses him of using company money to buy his personal assets such as furniture and using its funds to meet his own medical bills on treatment abroad hence leading to financial loss.

"In December 2015, Mr Kaijuka ordered for furniture worth \$23,613 (about Shs85m) from Dubai in United Arab Emirates for his personal use and never cleared it, which compelled AGR to settle this amount on condition that he would refund the money," the statement adds.

The former minister is also accused of threatening to "drag the company reputation in the mud" after the chief executive officer, Mr Alain Goetz, declined to clear his medical bills in United States worth \$160,000 (about Shs576m) in July. The company had footed his medical bills worth \$15,000 (about Shs 54m) for Lastik surgery (eye operation) in Dubai in 2016 and declined to refund the money upon return.

He is also accused of appointing his son, Kamanzi Kaijuka as one of the managers of AGR.