

Accra energy independence

Accra, Nov 11, GNA – Dr. Mustapha Abdul-Hamid, President of African Refiners and Distribution Association (ARDA) has proposed a three-tier strategy to promote Africa's energy independence.

According to a statement copied to the Ghana News agency in Accra on Monday, President of the ARDA, was speaking at the African Energy Week in Cape Town, South Africa and called for a halt in the export of crude oil from Africa, insisting that the continent was far from meeting its energy security amid rising population.

It said for example, Ghana had a fuel sulfur limit of 50 parts per million (ppm), while several West African neighbours allowed levels between 1,500 and 3,000 ppm, making imports challenging and costly.

He also emphasised the importance of collaboration among regulatory bodies, national oil companies, and governments to develop a unified approach to energy production and distribution, adding that efforts like Ghana's policy requiring companies to use locally refined fuel for oil extraction machinery strengthened domestic refinery output.

Currently, oil marketers in Ghana require \$400 million each month to import refined petroleum products; a demand that constantly pressures the Ghanaian Cedi. Developing a shared currency within regional blocs like West Africa could reduce these pressures and allow us to strengthen our economies, he suggested.

He argued that by reducing reliance on foreign currencies for energy transactions, African countries could better stabilise their economies, reduce energy import costs, and foster long-term energy security.

Dr Abdul-Hamid, who doubles as the Chief Executive of the National Petroleum Authority (NPA) stressed the need for Africa to refine and use its own resources rather than exporting raw crude oil only to re-import refined products.

Nobody puts crude oil in their vehicle or airplane; everything that generates movement and wealth is a refined product. This underlines the need for closer collaboration between Africa's upstream and downstream sectors to ensure that the continent fully benefits from its natural resources, he said.

Secretary General of African Petroleum Producers Organisation (APPO), Omar Farouk Ibrahim, stressed the need to build robust infrastructure within Africa to reduce dependency on foreign markets and cautioned that reliance on imported resources left African countries vulnerable to international sanctions and supply disruptions.



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“We have vast resources on our continent, yet we often depend on imports for energy. Partnering neighbouring countries to build the necessary infrastructure can secure our energy needs,” Ibrahim said, adding that developing intra-continental infrastructure is crucial to achieving genuine energy security.

Chief Executive of Association of Oil and Gas Marketing Companies, Riverson Opong, highlighted Africa’s paradox of exporting raw resources while lacking refined products for domestic use and pointed out that nearly 90 per cent of Africa’s crude production was exported.

“We have the resources, but we lack access to them because we are locked into a cycle of exporting raw materials and re-importing finished products. This cycle compromises our economic stability and weakens our energy security,” Opong noted.

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Web: <https://www.sumthingtasty.co.za/contact-us/>

Email: energystorage2000@gmail.com

WhatsApp: 8613816583346

