

MTN Nigeria's legal battles pile up

Abu Dhabi headquartered telecoms company Etisalat is suing MTN for the second time in under year in Nigeria. Etisalat confirmed to Bloomberg that it is suing MTN over the latter's purchase of Nigerian internet provider Visafone Communications.



Via [Fin24](#)

Etisalat said MTN's purchase could create a dominant data services market player in Nigeria, harming competition. MTN confirmed to Fin24 that Etisalat Nigeria has served it with a court summons based on a lawsuit. But MTN added that it's not the first time it's been sued in Nigeria by Etisalat.

"In July 2015, the company (Etisalat Nigeria) filed a suit against the NCC (Nigerian Communications Commission) and MTN, at the Federal High Court, Lagos, seeking a number of orders including an order of mandamus to compel NCC to direct MTN to withdraw its 11kobo per second tariff plan, amongst others," said MTN in an emailed statement to Fin24.

"This was the same tariff plan widely advertised and being charged by other networks including Etisalat and approved by the NCC.

"MTN filed a preliminary objection challenging the suit, and on 2 December, 2015, Etisalat's action was dismissed by the court with costs awarded in favour of NCC and MTN," said the company.

Regarding the latest court action by Etisalat, MTN Nigeria executive Amina Oyagbola said the acquisition of Visafone was concluded after obtaining statutory and regulatory approvals.

However, Oyagbola was not willing to comment further on the lawsuit as the matter is "sub judice".

MTN's fine challenge

The NCC last year slapped a \$3.9bn fine on MTN Nigeria after the mobile network failed to disconnect five million SIM cards in a timely manner.

MTN Nigeria is challenging the fine in court. Last month, a Lagos court adjourned MTN's legal challenge to

March 18 to give the parties a chance to settle the matter.

[Fin24](#) via News24 Wire

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