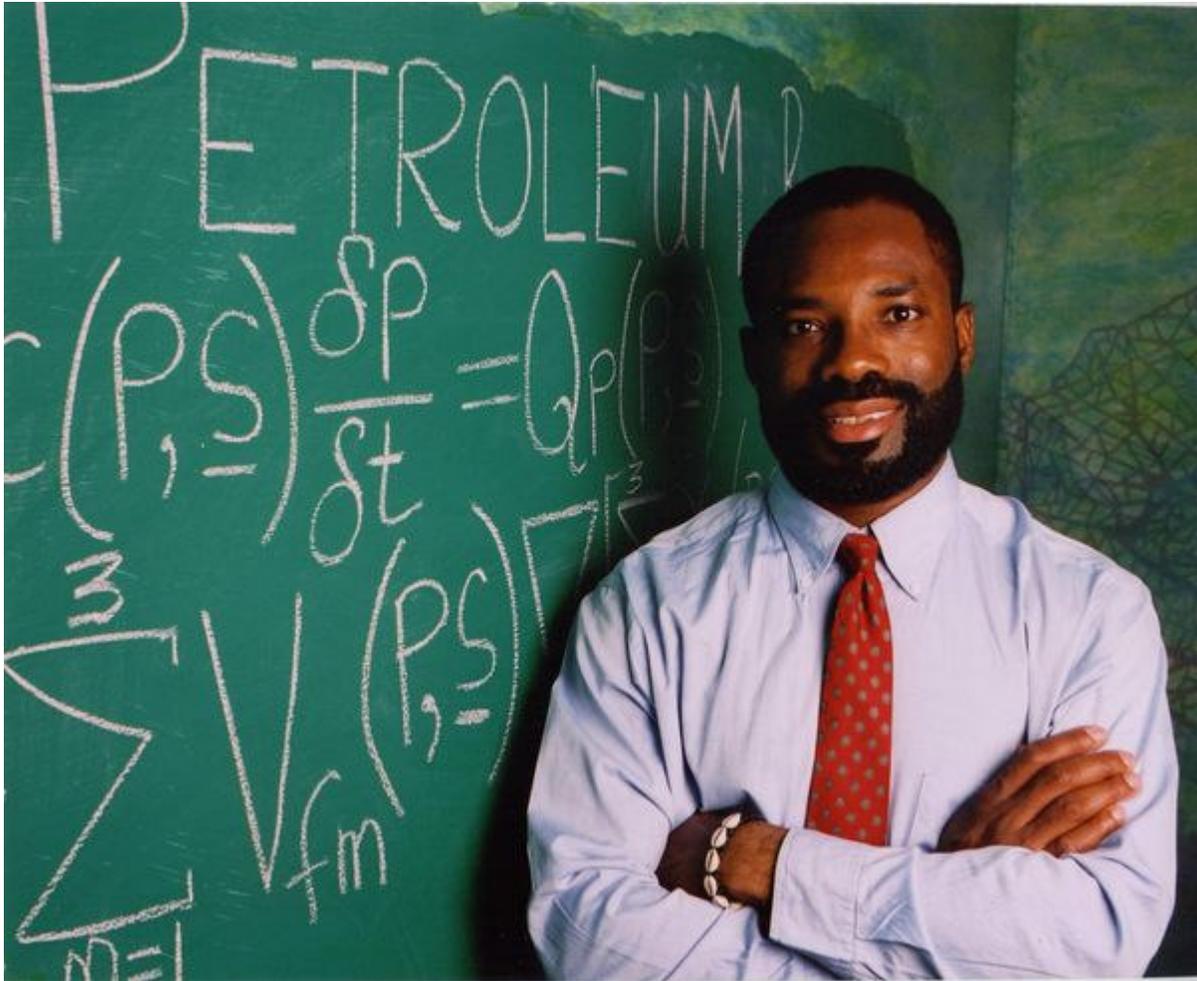


Nigeria is owing me

Philip Emeagwali, United States-based Nigerian computer scientist and winner of the prestigious Gordon Bell Prize has said the federal government still owes him fees for the investigations he conducted into the country's diminishing petroleum resources.



Emeagwali is revered for programming 65,536 processors to perform 3.1 billion calculations in a second, a feat that propelled the reinvention of the supercomputer.

Though he was silent on the amount involved, he said the unpaid outstanding was the reason why he is not prepared to physically partake in any efforts at developing Nigeria

In an interview with *Share Our World*, a Celtel quarterly, he said he was not happy with Nigeria because he never got paid for his investigation into the diminishing Nigerian petroleum resources by the federal government

He said he warned elected officials that oil and gas are not renewable and do not flow endlessly like the River Niger and that existing oil wells are yielding ever declining rates

The officials, according to him, were also told that Nigeria's oil reserves are diminishing at three percent a year and warned that the challenge was not in discovering more oil reserves but in recovering existing ones.

He said this is because for every barrel of oil recovered, two remain unrecoverable due to the difficulty extracting oil from fields.

"It is true that I left Nigeria 33 years ago and my last visit to Africa was 20 years ago. My 16 year-old son and wife of 25 years have never visited Africa. Despite my three decades absence, I have been residing at the edge of knowledge and pushing the envelope of technology thus contributing to humanity, Africa included. I was the first scientist to prove that super computers with thousands of electronic brains called processors can be used to recover oil. This technology is used in Nigeria's oil exploration. Globally, it is an eight billion dollars a year industry. Oil companies alone purchase and use 10 percent of all supercomputers to discover and recover oil.

"Nigeria rewards the oil companies that consume the technology that I produced. The oil companies receive 40 percent of Nigeria's oil revenue or about 200 billion dollars. The Petroleum Technology Development Fund [PTDF] receives billions. I receive no compensation from oil companies or PTDF. I was not paid for 15 years of excruciating hard intellectual labour", Emeagwali said.

On when he planned to reconnect with Africa and contribute to the development of Nigeria, he replied: "I never got paid for the work that

I did. Since time immemorial, people in the creative professions were patronised. Could Beethoven, Mozart and Bach have created music without patrons that paid their living expenses? Mark Anthony benefited from the patronage of Julius Caesar and the great mathematician, Leonard Euler, relocated to St. Petersburg to earn a stipend from Queen Catherine of Russia. Intellectual exiles will relocate to Africa when they start receiving patronage"

