



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 29th January, 2009

1. The Senate met at 10.20 a.m. The Senate President read prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
The Senate President announced that he had examined the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 28th January, 2009 and approved same.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings were approved.

3. **Committee on Establishment and Public Service:**
Report on the Problems Associated with the Implementation of the Pension Reform Act (PRA) 2004:
Motion made: That the Senate do consider the Report of the Committee on Establishment and Public Service, on the problems associated with the Implementation of the Pension Reform Act (PRA) 2004 (*Senator Mohammed I. Ahmed*).

Question put and agreed to.

Report presented.

Recommendations:

- (i) Early submission of budget proposals and releases as at when due will solve the problem;
- (ii) The National Pension Commission should embark on an aggressive sensitization exercise to drive home the relevant details of the Pension Act and its application, particularly as they relate to:
 - (a) Rights of employees to choose their own Pension Fund Administrators; and
 - (b) The application of Section 12 of the Act which deals with the transfer of retiree's entitlements from Defined Benefit Scheme into the new Scheme;
- (iii) The Committee on Establishment and Public Service should conduct a Pension Summit involving operators and stakeholders of the scheme to address the problems of pension;
- (iv) The National Salaries, Income and Wages Commission should review the pension rate in accordance with Section 173(3) of the 1999 Constitution;

- (v) The Accountant-General of the Federation should ensure that the 66 months arrears of pension owed the Nigerian Coal Corporation retirees are paid to alleviate their hardship;
- (vi) Since the arrangement for payment of NCC Pensioners and other parastatals through insurance companies has failed, pensioners all over the nation should be paid directly through their bank accounts;
- (vii) The retirees said that the 25 % of Retirement Savings Account value paid to those who lost jobs as stipulated in Section 4 (2) of the Act, is not enough to start any valuable business, they therefore suggest 50%; and
- (viii) That there is need for the comprehensive review and evaluation of the operation of the scheme after four years of implementation (*Senator Mohammed I. Ahmed*).

Debate:

Recommendation (i):

Early submission of budget proposals and releases as at when due will solve the problem.

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the provision in recommendation (i), and insert the following instead thereof:

"Adequate provision of funds in the Budget and releases as at when due will ease the problem" (*Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Question on the recommendation as amended, put and agreed to.

Recommendation (ii):

That the National Pension Commission should embark on an aggressive sensitization exercise to drive home the relevant details of the Pension Act and its application, particularly as they relate to:

- (a) Rights of employees to choose their own Pension Fund Administrators; and
- (b) The application of Section 12 of the Act which deals with the transfer of retiree's entitlements from Defined Benefit Scheme into the new Scheme.

Question put and negated.

Recommendation (iii):

That the Committee on Establishment and Public Service should conduct a Pension Summit involving operators and stakeholders of the scheme to address the problems of pension.

Question put and negated.

Recommendation (iv):

That the National Salaries, Income and Wages Commission should review the pension rate in accordance with Section 173(3) of the 1999 Constitution.

Question put and agreed to.

Recommendation (v)

That the Accountant-General of the Federation should ensure that the 66 months arrears of pension owed the Nigerian Coal Corporation Retirees are paid to alleviate their hardship.

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the provision in recommendation (v) and insert the following instead thereof:

"That Pension arrears should be treated as debt and adequate provision should be made in supplementary budget" (*Senator Ike Ekweremadu*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Question on the recommendation as amended, put and agreed to.

Recommendation (vi):

That since the arrangement for payment of NCC Pensioners and other parastatals through insurance companies has failed, pensioners all over the nation should be paid directly through their bank accounts.

Question put and negatived.

Recommendation (vii):

That the retirees said that the 25% of Retirement Savings Account value paid to those who lost jobs as stipulated in section 4 (2) of the Act, is not enough to start any valuable business; they therefore suggest 50%

Question put and negatived.

Recommendation (viii):

That there is need for the comprehensive review and evaluation of the operation of the scheme after four years of implementation

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the provision in recommendation (viii) and insert the following instead thereof:

"That the Senate Committee on Establishment and Public Service undertake a comprehensive review and evaluate the operation of Pension Scheme and the Pension Act and report within four weeks (*Senator Teslim K. Folarin*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Question on the recommendation as amended, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

- (i) That adequate provision of funds in the Budget and releases as at when due will ease the problem;
- (ii) That the National Salaries, Income and Wages Commission should review the pension rate in accordance with Section 173(3) of the 1999 Constitution;
- (iii) That Pension arrears should be treated as debt and adequate provision should be made in supplementary budget; and
- (iv) That the Senate Committee on Establishment and Public Service undertake a comprehensive review and evaluate the operation of Pension Scheme and the Pension Act and report within four weeks (**S. Res/025/2/09**).

4. Occupational Safety and Health in Workplaces Bill 2009 (SB.191):

Consideration of Bill deferred to another legislative day.

5. **National Council for Occupational Safety and Health Bill 2009 (SB.130):**

Consideration of Bill deferred to another legislative day.

6. **Adjournment:**

Motion made: That the Senate do adjourn till Tuesday, 3rd February, 2009 at 10.00 a.m. (*Senate Leader*).

Adjourned accordingly at 12.40 p.m.

Dr. David A. B. Mark, GCON
President,
Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.