



SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 3rd October, 2006

1. The Senate met at 10:15 a.m. The Senate President read Prayers.
2. Votes and Proceedings:
The Senate President announced that he had examined the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 28th September, 2006 and approved same.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings were adopted.

3. Privilege:
National Merit Award of Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger:
Rising on Rule 14, the Senate Majority Leader, Senator Dalhatu S. Tafida invited the attention of the Senate to the conferment of a National Honour of the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) on the Senate President, Senator Ken Nnamani by the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in an address which he read as follows:

Mr. President, Distinguished Senators, it is a great opportunity to come under privilege and speak on the National Award of the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) to our very Distinguished President of the Senate, Senator Ken Nnamani. This is remarkable because it is the second highest honour in Nigeria. Distinguished Senators, you will agree with me that this is a well deserved honour.

Just for the records:

Senator Ken Nnamani was born on 2nd November, 1948.

He attended:

- (1) Union Secondary School, Amechi Awkunanaw in Enugu
- (2) Ibadan Grammar School Molete, Ibadan.
- (3) Ohio University Athen's U.S.A, and obtained WASC Division 1, H.S.C, Bachelor of Business (BBA), and Master of Business of Administration (MBA) Over the years;

Senator Ken Nnamani was a Principal Consultant; MAREDEC LTD, an Industrial Marketing Consulting Firm (1978 to Date), Consultants to DAEWOO E & C Ltd (Dawewoo Nigeria Ltd), Consultants to Du Pont De Nemours.

International SA, Geneva, responsible for the industrial marketing activities of the company in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Consultants to Nova Chemicals International SA,
Managing Director/Chief Executive, Export, Minerals & Finance Limited, a technical goods exchange organization.

Director, Quarrytech Limited.

Director, Owa Communications Limited.

Director, Aba Textile Mills Plc.

Director, Eleme Petrochemicals Co. Ltd.

Distinguished Senator Ken Nnamani has also made many community contributions.

- Built an all-purpose Hall for Umuedenta, Amechi Uwani.
- Construction of 50ht NEPA poles for extension of electricity from Ebony substation to Amechi Uwani Community.
- Tarring of 2.5 Kilometres of road in Amechi, fitting same with modern street lighting at a cost of N2.8 Million.
- Donated a 500 11/0.415 KV Transformer to the Amechi Uwani Community.
- Sponsored the extension of NITEL underground cables for digital telephone lines to Amechi, Awkunanaw Community.
- Introduced a scholarship scheme that has produced at least one University graduate a year.

On this score, Senator Ken Nnamani was recognized by his people as worthy son and given two Chieftaincy **Titles:**—

- Owa-na-echirioha of Enugu
- Aku-ruo-uno 1 of Amechi, Awkunanaw

Mr. President, Distinguished Senators, Senator Ken Nnamani was first elected to the Senate under the platform of UNCP in 1998 and was elected again in 2003 as a Senator under the platform of PDP, and again in recognition of his leadership qualities, we all elected him as the Senate President in April, 2005, and you will all agree with me that his tenure has witnessed the impressive handling of Senate debate and astute coordination of Senate business.

His deft handling of the debate on the Constitutional Amendment Bill comes to my mind here and it is another demonstration of his leadership capabilities so far. This Senate has been ever so united and purposeful in dealing with various National issues.

Once again I commend your leadership and congratulate you on the Award of the Grand Commander of the Order of the Niger (GCON) which you so richly deserve.

He enjoined Senators to join him in congratulating the Senate President on this great feat. *Many*

Senators paid glowing tributes to the sterling qualities of the Senate President.

In response the Senate President thanked Senators for their encomiums and acknowledged that he could not have achieved the feat without their cooperation.

4. **Matter of Urgent Public Importance:**

Rising on Rules 43 and 53, Senator Muktar M. Aruwa invited the attention of the Senate to the unpreparedness of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to successfully conduct the Voters registration exercise scheduled for Saturday, 7th October, 2006 and the 2007 General Elections. He sought and obtained the leave of the Senate for the matter to be debated forthwith.

WHEREAS the Senate upholds the independence of INEC and if credible election is expected in the country there is the need for INEC to be straight with Nigerians. Nigerians, and indeed this Senate, cannot however comprehend the insistence of INEC in using electronic registration machines as if the system is more important than the people for whom the system is intended and made for, thus creating the impression that a calculated attempt is on ground to undermine the wishes of Nigerian;

WHEREAS INEC recorded problems in registration and Voters ID from 2002 to 2003 when an Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) form was used by INEC to compile 70 million voters registration, but the manual registration was used alongside the Electronic registration system;

WHEREAS when INEC could not process all of the registration requirements before the 2003 elections, the Automatic Finger Identification System (AFIS) was suspended before the same elections;

WHEREAS, approximately 80% of the people were registered through this exercise, subsequent to 2003 election; the electronic servers from all the State were moved to INEC Headquarters, Abuja, to form a central database. INEC assumed AFIS to check and remove duplicates. Yet, according to INEC, there were problems with the enumeration process because much of the staff conducting the registration were poorly educated and ill-motivated;

WHEREAS, the registration and enumeration problems that besieged INEC in 2003 still exist in 2006. That irrespective, INEC still intends to use those electronic vending machines tried before, during and after the 2003 election;

WHEREAS, 120,000 electronic registration machines are required while only 43,000 units have been acquired. Vindicating those who suspect a calculated plan by INEC to undermine the electoral process. The plan is not limited to forcing electronic registration machines on Nigerians against their wish but also include plans to complicate the entire registration process by designating registration centres away from the residential area or neighbourhoods of registration applicants thereby presenting transportation problems to and from the centres,

WHEREAS further vindication of this claim can be seen in the enclosed distribution of voter registration machines nationwide to enable the Senate appreciate the enormity of the problem as it relates to different constituencies;

WHEREAS, analysis of Optical Mark Recognition (OMR) form as against Direct Capture; in 2006 INEC conducted in Abuja a pilot registration exercise using OMR with photo images. The pilot program identified three disadvantages —

- (i) general shading in the form presents a problem according to INEC,
- (ii) photo capture encountered many difficulties, including failure of rechargeable battery problems (e.g. termite and rain damage), slow processing speed, storage difficulties, and flash failure,. Thus, it is questionable, according to INEC, whether or not pictures captured during the pilot exercise will match the data from the OMR,
- (iii) considering the time frame in conducting the 2007 election, scanners and processing centres may be stretched too thin if a new registration is needed based on OMR forms;

WHEREAS, Nigeria needs INEC to conduct a credible, free and fair elections leading to successful civilian exchange of baton through the requisite provisions of the 2006 Electoral Act. Nothing more nothing less;

WHEREAS, display of voters register, transparent conduct of voters revision exercise, to my mind, should occupy the front burner in national discourse. These issues have combined to impose a more urgent dateline on this distinguished Senate; and

WHEREAS, Nigerians on whose mandate Senators were elected have expressed their rejection of any electronic device in the conduct of registration of voters and/or Election 2007.

Be it resolved: That (i) the Senate do urgently invite INEC Chairman and his registration officers to demonstrate typical

voter registration in the Senate, thereafter address the Senate on myraids of threats leading to public apathy attributable to INEC's insistence on the use of electronic registration machine despite its rejection.

- (ii) the Senate do urged the President, Commander-in-Chief to direct INEC to display existing voters register for revision in all the 120,000 polling units manually so as not to jeopardize 2007 General Elections.

- (iii) the Senate vide provision in the concurrent legislative list part II Section 4 paragraph 11 forthwith urge the President, Commander-in-Chief to direct INEC to suspend the idea of using electronic registration machine and or any electronic connected therewith. Contrary to the views of generality of Nigerians.
- (iv) the Senate to constitute a 9 man select committee to investigate the remote and immediate causes and or the rational behind INEC insistence on the use of Electronic Registration machine, contrary to the views expressed by Nigerians.
- (v) the said committee do look into the Finances or otherwise as well as to investigate the level of preparation towards conducting 2007 General Elections and report back to the senate within two weeks.

Debate:

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out prayers (i) - (v) and insert a new prayer as follows:

That the Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) be invited to brief the Senate on Wednesday, 4th October, 2006 by 12:00 noon on the state of readiness and preparedness to successfully conduct the Voters registration scheduled for Saturday 7th October, 2006 and the 2007 General Elections (*Senator Dalhatu S. Tafida*).

Question that the amendment be made put and agreed to.

Resolved:

That the Chairman, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) be invited to brief the Senate on Wednesday, 4th October, 2006 by 12:00 noon on the state of readiness and preparedness to successfully conduct the Voters registration scheduled for Saturday 7th October, 2006 and the 2007 General Elections (**S. Res/065/06**).

5. Privilege:

Rising on Rule 14, Senator Lawal Shuaibu invited the attention of the Senate to his inability to secure a Diplomatic visa with his Diplomatic passport to perform the lesser Hajj in Saudi Arabia. He stated that he was directed to obtain the visa through an agent which he viewed was a complete departure from the lawful procedures. He noted that the agents/touts, who are normally fronts for the Embassy officials, usually extort money from intending travellers before such visa were given. He opined that his ordeal at the Saudi Arabia Embassy was just a replica of what obtains in other embassies in the country.

Concluding, he stated that such nefarious activities of the embassies were an infringement on his privileges as a distinguished Senator of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and those of other Nigerians who on daily bases are confronted with these ugly incidences.

Debate:

Resolved:

That the Minister of Foreign Affairs be invited to brief the Senate on a date to be communicated to the Senate the next legislative day.

6. Presentation of Bills:

(i) National Identity Management Commission (Establishment, etc.) Bill 2006 (SB. 320) —*Read the First Time.*

(ii) National Consumer Credit Regulatory Commission (Establishment, etc) Bill, 2006 (SB.323) —*Read the First Time.*

(iii) Abuja Geographic Information Systems Agency (Establishment, etc) Bill, 2006 (SB.333) —*Read the First Time.*

7. Ad-Hoc Committee on Information:

Report on the Freedom of Information Bill 2006 (HB. 08):

Motion made and Question Proposed: That the Senate do receive the Report of the Ad-hoc Committee on Information on the Freedom of Information Bill 2006 (*Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba*).

Question put and agreed to.

Report Laid.

8. Institute of Chartered Economists of Nigeria (Establishment, etc) Bill 2006 (SB. 316).

Bill by leave of the Senate withdrawn.

9. Export of Nigeria Produce Act (Repeal) Bill, 2006 (SB.247).

Bill by leave of the Senate withdrawn.

10. Adjournment:

Motion made and Question Proposed: That the Senate do adjourn till Wednesday, 4th October, 2006 at 10.00 a.m. (*Senate Majority Leader*).

Adjourned accordingly at 1.50p.m.

Ken Nnamani
President of the Senate