



# SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

## VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 9th July, 2008

1. The Senate met at 11.05 a.m. The Senate President read prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**  
The Senate President announced that he had examined the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 8th July, 2008 and approved same.

*By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings were approved.*

3. **Announcements:**  
The Senate President acknowledged the presence of the following who were in the gallery to observe Senate Proceedings:
  - (i) Members of the National Association of Marketing Students, Imo State University, Owerri; and
  - (ii) Staff and Students of Livingstone School, Gwarinpa Estate, Abuja.

4. **Closed Session:**  
*Motion made:* That the Senate do resolve into a Closed Session to discuss issues relevant to the workings of the Senate (*Senate Leader*).

*Question put and agreed to.*

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|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| <b>Closed Session</b> | — | <b>11:15 a.m.</b> |
| <b>Open Session</b>   | — | <b>11:35 a.m.</b> |

The Senate President reported that the Senate in Closed Session deliberated on issues relating to the general welfare of the Senate.

5. **Personal Explanation:**  
Rising on Order 43, the Senate Leader, Senator Teslim K. Folarin drew the attention of the Senate to the Legislative Calender circulated to Senators. He informed the Senate that there is need to amend the calender in order to accommodate the increasing Committees' activities. He urged that the Senate recess should commence on Friday, 11th July, 2008 as against the earlier passed date. The Senate leader stated that the recess period would enable Committees attend to their assignments.

*By leave of the Senate, the Legislative Calendar was accordingly amended and adopted.*

**6. Presentation of Bills:**

(i) Rivers Basins Authorities Act (Amendment) Bill 2008 (SB. 134) — *Read the First Time.*

(ii) National Security Enhancement Bill 2008 (SB. 128) — *Read the First Time.* (iii)

Critical Infrastructure Protection Bill 2008 (SB. 132) — *Read the First Time.*

(iv) National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (Establishment, etc) Bill 2008 (SB. 123) — *Read the First Time.*

(v) Federal Capital Territory Area Council Administration Bill 2008 (SB.131) — *Read the First Time.*

**7. Presentation of Committee Sessional Reports:**

*Motion made:* That the Senate do receive the Sessional Report of the Committees listed on the Order of the day in accordance with Rule 102(1) (d) of the Senate Standing Order 2007 as amended for the period June 2007 - June 2008 (*Senate Leader*).

*Question put and agreed to.*

*The following Committees' Chairmen Laid their Sessional Report:*

(i) Committee on Rules and Business;

(ii) Committee on Defence and Army;

(iii) Committee on Power;

(iv) Committee on Federal Capital Territory;

(v) Committee on Marine Transport;

(vi) Committee on Information and Media;

(vii) Committee on Security and Intelligence;

(viii) Committee on Navy;

(ix) Committee on Petroleum (Downstream);

(x) Committee on Land Transport;

(xi) Committee on Appropriation;

(xii) Committee on Works;

(xiii) Committee on Drugs, Narcotics and Anti-Corruption;

**9. Alarming Increase in the Prices of Kerosene and Diesel:**

*Motion made:* That the Senate notes that Nigeria is a prominent member of Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and is the largest producer of Crude Oil in Africa and the Eight largest in the World;

**Notes** also that diesel, Kerosene, Petrol, which are some of the products derived from Crude Oil are used for both domestic and industrial purposes and are significant ingredients in Industrial growth and development;

**Observes** that the prices of some of these petroleum products, notably Kerosene and diesel, have been on the increase in recent time with adverse consequences on the economy of this country;

**Observes** also that this situation has paralyzed Industrial activities in most parts of the country resulting in the loss of millions of jobs; high cost of transportation, increase in the cost of food items, goods and services, and a general high cost of living;

**Concerned** that this ugly Scenario is attributed to the unwholesome activities of private Depot Owners who undermine the subsidy granted by the Federal Government to sell these products at exorbitant prices

**Concerned** further that in this circumstance the Government Agency responsible for the administration of the oil sector seems to be incapable of addressing the problems.

**Accordingly resolves that the Senate do:**

- (i) **Condemn** the unwholesome activities of the private depot owners who undermine the subsidy granted by the Federal Government to sell these products at exorbitant prices for their selfish gains;
- (ii) **Urge** the President, Commander-in-Chief to direct the Ministry of Petroleum Resources to intervene in the matter;
- (iii) **Direct** its Committee on Petroleum Resources (Upstream) to investigate the matter and report back within four weeks.
- (iv) **Urge** the Federal Government to pay the Independent Marketers their transport claims running into Billions of Naira between 2006 to 2008 (*Senator Kabiru I. Gaya*).

**Debate:**

**Prayer (i):**

**Question**, That the Senate do condemn the unwholesome activities of the private depot owners who undermine the subsidy granted by the Federal Government to sell these products at exorbitant prices for their selfish gains — *Negatived*.

**Prayer (ii):**

**Question**, That the Senate do urge the President, Commander-in-Chief to direct the Ministry of Petroleum Resources to intervene in the matter — *Agreed to*.

**Prayer (iii):**

**Question**, That the Senate do direct its Committee on Petroleum Resources (Upstream) to investigate the matter and report back within four weeks.

**Amendment Proposed:**

Leave out the word "(Upstream)" and insert the word "(Downstream)" instead thereof (*Senator Nimi Barigha-Amange*).

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

**Prayer (iv):**

**Question**, That the Senate do urge the Federal Government to pay the Independent Marketers their transport claims running into Billions of Naira between 2006 to 2008 — *Negatived*.

*Resolved:*

- (i) That the Senate do urge the President, Commander-in-Chief to direct the Ministry of Petroleum Resources to intervene in the matter.
- (ii) That the Senate do direct its Committee on Petroleum Resources (Downstream) to investigate the matter and report back within four weeks (**S. Res/003/2/08**).

**10. Passing to the Great Beyond of Senator Melford Obiene Okilo:**

*Motion made:* That the Senate notes that Saturday, the 5th of July 2008 will forever mark the day this country lost a political icon; it will mark for the Niger Delta the loss of a rare mentor and elder statesman, and for the Bayelsa East Senatorial District, it is the departure of a political god father, social mentor and a selfless leader whose humility and ordinariness shall remain eternal ideals for us all to emulate.

**Observes** that the passing away of Senator Melford Okilo on 5th July, 2008, should be the end of a man but not the end of the political ideals he represented. Born on November 30th 1933, the late Senator belongs to the pre-independence political era when as a member of parliament, the then 26 years old political prodigy served as a parliamentary secretary between 1959 and 1964 on the platform of the Niger Delta Congress (NDC) which merged with the Northern Peoples Congress (NPC) to form the first government at independence.

**Notes also that:**

- (i) He was a Commissioner of Education in the old Rivers State from 1972 to 1974;
- (ii) He became a Councilor in 1975 to 1976;
- (iii) He became a Governor of the old Rivers State in 1979 till 1983;
- (iv) He was made a Minister of Commerce in 1993 till 1995;
- (v) He became a Senator in 1999 till 2003; and
- (vi) In 2003 he was a Presidential running mate to M. D. Yusuf on the platform of MDJ.

**Observes** further that as a visionary Governor of the old Rivers State, the legacies of the late Senator includes the establishment of the Rivers State University of Science and Technology; the Independent Power Plant at Imiringi (now Bayelsa State), both of which have since been acclaimed as the first of their kind. As a grassroots representative and author of the book, God, Man and Politics, the late Senator has long been admitted into the people's hall of fame.

**Observes** further that as a pre-independence politician he could be described as a bridge builder between the North and the South. For these achievements and especially, his belief in the gentle philosophy of politics without bitterness I, Sen. Nimi Barigha-Amange who, today stand on the large foot prints of such a revered figure, feel duty-bound to call on the Senate to:

**Accordingly resolve to:**

- (i) Observe a minute silence in honour of our late colleague; and
- (ii) Send a letter of condolence to the Government and people of Bayelsa State. (*Senator Nimi Barigha-Amange*).

*Debate:*

*Prayer (i):*

*Question,* That the Senate do observe a minute silence in honour of our late colleague — *Agreed to.*

Prayer (ii):

*Question*, That the Senate do send a letter of condolence to the Government and people of Bayelsa State.

**Amendment Proposed:**

*Leave out* the provision in Prayer (ii) and *insert* and the following instead thereof:

"That the Senate do send a letter of condolence and a delegation to the family, Government and People of Rivers and Bayelsa States" (*Senator George Thompson Sekibo*).

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

*Question on Prayer (ii) as amended put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:*

- (i) That the Senate do observe a minute silence in honour of our late colleague.
- (ii) That the Senate do send a letter of condolence and a delegation to the family, Government and People of Rivers and Bayelsa States (**S. Res/004/2/08**)

*One minute silence accordingly observed.*

**11. Report of the Committee on Niger-Delta:**

***Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Appropriation Bill 2008 (SB. 121):***

*Consideration of the Report deferred to another legislative day.*

**12. 2008 Appropriation Act (Amendment) Bill 2008 (SB. 133):**

*Consideration of the Bill deferred to another legislative day.*

**13. Flaring of Natural Gas in Nigeria Bill 2008 (SB. 126):**

*Consideration of the Bill deferred to another legislative day.*

**14. Adjournment:**

*Motion made:* That the Senate do adjourn till Thursday, 10th July, 2008 at 10.00 a.m. (*Senate Leader*).

*Adjourned accordingly at 1.58 p.m.*

**David A. B. Mark, GCON**  
*President of the Senate*