



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 26 June, 2007

1. The House met at 10.20 a.m. Madam Speaker read Prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
Madam Speaker announced that she had examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 6 June, 2007.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings was adopted,
3. **Oaths of Allegiance and Membership:**
Member-elect, Bala Ibn Na Allah (*Zuru/Sakaba/Dabai/Wasagu Federal Constituency, Kebbi State*) took and subscribed the Oaths as prescribed by law.
4. **Remarks by the Rt Hon. Patricia Olubunmi Etteh, Speaker, House of Representatives on the Resumption of the House:**
Madam Speaker addressed the House as follows:

Honourable Members,

I am honoured and delighted to welcome all of us back to plenary session. As you are all aware, the brief adjournment was meant to enable Honourable Members settle down, so that the serious business of the Legislature can commence.

Now that we are back to plenary with renewed vigour, we should be ready to fulfill the mandate Nigerians have conferred on us. The urgency with which our national circumstance requires attention also means that we must sustain this tempo all through. Nigerians look up to us for the enhancement of a functional framework towards national restoration.

Vision

The thrust of government's Reform Agenda revolves around the foremost ideals of poverty reduction, wealth creation, employment generation, value re-orientation, and respect for the rule of law. More than any other arm of government, we have a strategic role to make Nigerians buy into these reforms through the enactment of enabling and proactive legislations. We must facilitate, in the most practical manner, the implementation of these programmes and policies, including the crusade against corruption. This is the only way to ensure that the reforms become an enduring feature of our national life.

*The national reform effort ought to be supported, not because it is a government initiative, **but** essentially because the majority of our people have affirmed that this is the right way to tread. The Legislature will remain the major institution to re-engineer this effort of national transformation.*

Our experiences of the past have clearly indicated that our constitutional document must be realigned along the true wishes of Nigerians. It must be made to reflect the collective national aspiration. The need to practice true federalism and take care of the diverse interests of our people, are some of the reasons why constitutional reforms have become imperative.

While our peculiar circumstance as a developing country can not be gainsaid, we will, however, constantly strive to imbibe international best practices in terms of legislative procedure and delivery. Together, we should be courageous in instituting far-reaching reforms, some of which may be unpalatable but are nonetheless desirable. Our activities must always be cost-effective and adhere to the dictates of due process. In this regard, the rather unwieldy nature of the Committees of the House is being addressed for better effectiveness.

We are fully committed to building the legislative capacity of Honourable members. To realize our central objective of promoting good governance, we will explore all avenues to empower our legislators through regular seminars, workshops and retreats. We will also put at the disposal of every member, the National Assembly ICT infrastructure, for enhanced productivity. Amongst you here is a huge repository of vibrant human capital that should be deployed to the advantage of the nation.

Challenges

In meeting up to our role of representation, it is incumbent on us to ensure that our people's interests are well captured and adequately projected. There is need for constant interaction with our constituencies in aggregating their concerns. This can be achieved only when Honourable Members make themselves physically available to the people and rub minds with them in the most intimate ways. The feelings and aspirations of the citizens of Nigeria must reflect in all our debates and deliberations.

The second leg of the tripod of our responsibilities has to do with the important business of law-making. We must be proactive in initiating bills instead of waiting on the Executive to do this. We should continue to uphold the provisions of our rules, and grant Nigerian people the opportunity to contribute to the law-making process through results-oriented public hearings and other interactive activities. We should be keen about setting a record on expeditious passage of Bills, and strive to surpass the commendable records of past legislative terms.

For our oversight functions, we must redouble our efforts in ensuring that budgetary targets are met and laws are faithfully implemented. This will be achieved through the consistent monitoring of fund releases, project implementation, and due compliance with the rule of law. It is our duty to hold public officials accountable to our people at all times.

Generally speaking, the need to keep ourselves informed and regularly up-dated on issues of national concern needs not be overemphasized. We must rededicate ourselves to the nation through sacrifices and unwavering patriotism.

Expectations

Nigerians expect quite a lot from us. And rightly so. We must not let the people down. In fact, we can not afford to betray their expectations in the potential of democracy as the best guarantee of good governance.

To reinforce our people's belief in participatory democracy, it is incumbent on us to ensure that Nigerians enjoy the full dividends of democracy. The cumulative effect of our work as legislators should, therefore, be such that would uplift our people from the throes of insecurity, backwardness and poverty, to the higher threshold of peace, progress and prosperity. These are expectations and challenges that are well within our capacity to confront and overcome.

Conclusion

Honorable members, we must remain focused and patriotic, so that the 6 National Assembly, of which we all are proud members, will occupy a special position when the history of Nigeria is being written. Quality leadership, sacrifice and institutional transformation are other prized legacies we must endeavour to bequeath in the strive to etch our names in gold.

Honorable colleagues, I welcome you back and wish us all God's guidance and direction in providing the very best for Nigeria and Nigerians.

I thank you all.

(Signed)
Rt Hon. (Mrs) Patricia Olubunmi Etteh
Speaker
House of Representatives

5. **Announcements:**(7) *Visitors:*

Madam Speaker recognized the presence in the Gallery, of Staff and Students of Regina Pacis **Girls'** Secondary School, Garki, Abuja.

(ii) *Party Leadership:*

Madam Speaker announced the leadership of the All Nigeria Peoples **Party (ANPP)** and **the Action Congress (AC)** in the House as follows:

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume Hon.
Femi Gbajabiamila Hon. Suleiman
Abdulrahman Kawu Hon. Bello
Matawalle

— A
N
P
P

Leader and Minority Leader

— AC Leader and Minority Whip
— ANPP Whip and Deputy Minority Leader
— Deputy ANPP Leader and Deputy Minority Whip

(Hi) *Bereavement:*

Madam Speaker further announced the death of Hon. Abel Akinwale, the husband of **Hon.** Florence Tinuke Akinwale as contained in the following **letter**.




Hon. (Mrs) Akinwale Florence Tinuke
(EKITI SOUTH) FEDERAL
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 National Assembly Complex, Three
 Arms **Zone, P.M.B. 141, Garki -Abuja**

*The Rt Hon. Speaker,
Federal House of Representatives, v
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja.*

NOTIFICATION OF DEATH

This is to bring to your notice the death of my husband, Hon. Abel Akinwale — the immediate past Executive Chairman of Emure Local Government as a result of ghastly motor accident along Abuja-Abaji road on Friday, 8th of June, 2007.

The accident claimed the lives of my elder brother - Hon. Clement Adewale and my driver — Mr Ganiyu Fagbure.

The burial arrangements are slated for Wednesday and Thursday, 27th & 28th of June 2007 respectively.

Invitation Cards are being forwarded to you. Please support us with your prayers.

*(Signed) Hon.
F. T. Akinwale*

(Hon. Binta M. Garba and Hon. Aminu Safana, rendered prayers for the repose of the souls of the deceased)

(iv) *Speaker's Nomenclature:*

Madam Speaker recalled that the question of appropriate nomenclature for her arose following her election to the Chair of the Speaker of the House of Representatives. She stated that the Clerk of the House had received confirmation from the House of Commons and the Parliament of the Republic of

South Africa, both of which had similar experience, that "Madam Speaker" is the appropriate appellation.

6. Presentation of Reports:

- (i) *Ad-Hoc Committee on the Review of the House Standing Orders:*
Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do receive the Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Review of the House Standing Orders" (Hon. Ita Enang).

Question put and agreed to.

Report Laid.

- (ii) *Ad-Hoc Committee on Members' Welfare:*
Motion made and Question proposed, " That this House do receive the Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Members' Welfare" (Hon. Festus Adegoke).

Question put and agreed to.

Report Laid.

7. Recent Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC) Industrial Action vis-a-vis the On-Going Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) Strike:

Motion made and Question proposed,
The House:

Notes that the four days industrial action embarked upon by NLC and TUC has brought social, political and economic activities in the country to a standstill;

Concerned that Nigerians experienced untold hardship, discomfort and suffering while the strike lasted;

Recognizes the roles played by prominent Nigerians including the Leadership of the National Assembly in mediating between Government and Labour Union;

Appreciates the fatherly roles played by Mr President, the Federal Government Negotiating Team as well as the patriotism demonstrated by the Labour Leaders;

Disturbed that the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is yet to call off its three months old industrial action,

Resolves to:

- (i) commend Mr President, the Leadership of the National Assembly, the Federal Government Negotiating Team, the Labour Leaders and other distinguished Nigerians who played prominent roles in ending the industrial action;
- (it) applaud Nigerians for their patience and understanding as a result of the untold hardship, discomfort and suffering while the strike lasted;
- (iii) urge ASUU to follow the laudable example of the NLC/TUC and immediately call-off their three months old industrial action and resume negotiations with Government;
- (iv) further urge the Federal Government to employ proactive measures that will forestall there-occurrence of future disagreement with Organized Labour Unions (*Hon. Abubakar Garba Shehu Matazu and 9 Others*).

Debate:

Amendments Proposed:

- (0) *Leave out all the words in prayer (Hi) and insert the following instead thereof:*
"urge both the ASUU/Federal Government of Nigeria to allow the laudable example of the NLC/TUC/FGN and immediately resolve their differences so as to end the three months-old industrial action" (Hon. A. U. Faruk).

Question put and agreed to.

- (ii) *Leave out all the words in prayer (iv) and insert the following instead thereof:*
"further urge the Federal Government to employ prompt measures that will lead to an early resolution of future disagreement with Organized Labour Unions" (Hon. A. U. Faruk).

Question put and agreed to.

- (iii) *Insert a new prayer (v) as follows:*
"recommend the establishment of an Ad-Hoc Committee to examine whether due process was followed before price increment in Petroleum Products and also the sale of the Refineries" (Hon. Emmanuel Jime).

Question put and negatived.

Main Question, as amended, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

The House:

Noted that the four days industrial action embarked upon by NLC and TUC has brought social, political and economic activities in the country to a standstill;

Concerned that Nigerians experienced untold hardship, discomfort and suffering while the strike lasted;

Recognized the roles played by prominent Nigerians including the Leadership of the National Assembly in mediating between Government and Labour Union;

Appreciated the fatherly roles played by Mr President, the Federal Government Negotiating Team as well as the patriotism demonstrated by the Labour Leaders;

Disturbed that the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) is yet to call off its three months old industrial action,

Resolved to:

- (i) commend Mr President, the Leadership of the National Assembly, the Federal Government Negotiating Team, the Labour Leaders and other distinguished Nigerians who played prominent roles in ending the industrial action;
- (ii) applaud Nigerians for their patience and understanding as a result of the untold hardship, discomfort and suffering while the strike lasted;
- (iii) urge both the ASUU/FGN to allow the laudable example of the NLC/TUC/FGN and immediately resolve their differences so as to end the three months-old industrial action;
- (iv) further urge the FGN to employ prompt measures that will lead to an early resolution of future disagreement with organized Labour Unions (HR. 01/2007).

8. **Executive Session** — **11.55a.m**

House in Plenary — **2.01p.m.**

9. **Adjournment:**

That this House do now adjourn till Wednesday, 27 June, 2007 at 2.00 p.m. (*Hon. Tunde Akogun*).

Adjourned accordingly at 2.06 p.m.