



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 22 November, 2007

1. The House met at 10.50 a.m. Mr Speaker read Prayers.

2. **Votes and Proceedings:**

Mr Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 21 November 2007.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings was adopted.

3 **Announcement:**

Conferment of Fellowship:

Mr Speaker read a letter from Hon. Mohammad Sard Abdu (*Alkaleri/Kiifi Federal Constituency*), notifying the House of the conferment of Fellowship award on him by the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered).

4. **Petitions:**

Two petitions were received and referred to the Committee on Public Petitions:

(i) Hon. Dino Melaye (*Kabba/Bunu/Ijumu Federal Constituency*), from Akintola Olorunfemi, praying the House to investigate the reckless driving of a Reynolds Construction Company (RCC) Toyota Hilux which destroyed his car and caused him bodily injury and to grant the reliefs sought therein;

{ii} Hon. Mulikat Akande Adeola (*Ogbomosho North/South/Orire Federal Constituency*), from Simon Alade Odoje, praying the House to investigate his alleged wrongful dismissal from the Service of the Federal Capital Territory Development Administration (FCTA) and to grant the reliefs sought therein.

5. **The Sale of Ajaokuta Steel Company in Kogi State to Global Infrastructure (Nig) Ltd:**

The House:

Notes, that Ajaokuta Steel Company Ltd in Kogi State is valued at five billion, five hundred million U.S. dollars when a technical audit was carried out by Russians TPE in 1998/99 and the plant was certified viable;

Aware, that the Federal Government had a concession agreement with Global Infrastructure (Nig.) Ltd to manage Ajaokuta Steel Company for ten years in 2004, until the plant was hurriedly offered for sale at \$550 million U.S. dollars by same government 2 years into the agreement;

Worried, that Global Infrastructure (Nig.) Ltd is already vandalizing equipment at the plant contrary to the agreement signed with the Federal Government in terms of operating the Mill, and the controversial circumstance in which the Sapele Power Plant, a Sea Port in Warri, Central Railway line to Itakpe and Itakpe Iron-Ore and Delta Steel Mill Alaja were sold to Mr Pramod Mittal, an Indian;

Disturbed, that Steel experts from Austria and Russia took between 2 and 3 months to conduct an audit on Ajaokuta Steel Company in 1997 and 2000 respectively but curiously the Bureau of Public Enterprise (BPE) conducted similar exercise on the plant in 3 days.

Resolves to:

Mandate, the Joint Committee on Privatisation and Commercialisation and Power and Steel to conduct a Public Hearing on the sale of the Ajaokuta Steel Company Ltd with a view to ascertaining compliance or otherwise with laid down procedures and make recommendations to the House (*Hon. Dino Daniel Melaye and 55 Others*).

Debate:

By leave of the House, debate deferred to allow the Committee on Rules and Business furnish the House with previous actions on the subject matter.

6. A Bill for a Act to Authorize the issue from the Consolidation Revenue Fund of the Federation the total sum of Two Trillion, Four Hundred and Fifty-Three Billion, Six Hundred and Thirty-Eight Million, One Hundred and Ninety-Six Thousand, Nine Hundred and Seventy-Nine Naira (N2,453,638,196,979) only of which the sum of One Hundred and eighty-Seven Billion, Six Hundred Million (N187,600,000,000) only is for Statutory and the sum of Three Hundred and Seventy-Two Billion, Two Hundred Million Naira (N372,200,000,000) only is for Debt Service, while the sum of One Trillion, Two Hundred and Fifty-Nine Billion, One Hundred and Twenty-One Million, Two Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand, Sixty-One Naira (N1,259,121,253,061) only is for Recurrent (Non-Debt) Expenditure and the balance of Six Hundred and Thirty-Four Billion, Seven Hundred and Seventeen Million, Six Hundred and Seventy-Nine Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Nine Naira (N634,717,679,959) only is for Capital Expenditure for the Year Ending 31st December 2008 — Second Reading:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for a Act to Authorize the issue from the Consolidation Revenue Fund of the Federation the total sum of Two Trillion, Four Hundred and Fifty-Three Billion, Six Hundred and Thirty-Eight Million, One Hundred and Ninety-Six Thousand, Nine Hundred and Seventy-Nine Naira (N2,453,638,196,979) only of which the sum of One Hundred and eighty-Seven Billion, Six Hundred Million (N187,600,000,000) only is for Statutory and the sum of Three Hundred and Seventy-Two Billion, Two Hundred Million Naira (N372,200,000,000) only is for Debt Service, while the sum of One Trillion, Two Hundred and Fifty-Nine Billion, One Hundred and Twenty-One Million, Two Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand, Sixty-One Naira (N1,259,121,253,061) only is for Recurrent (Non-Debt) Expenditure and the balance of Six Hundred and Thirty-Four Billion, Seven Hundred and Seventeen Million, Six Hundred and Seventy-Nine Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Nine Naira (N634,717,679,959) only is for Capital Expenditure for the Year Ending 31st December, 2008 be now read a Second Time {*Hon. Tunde Akogun*}.

(Adjourned Debate: 21 November, 2007).

Debate resumed:

Closing Remarks by the Honourable Speaker, House of Representatives, Dimeji S. Bankole, on the Debate on the General Principles of the 2008 Budget:

Honourable Colleagues,

We have commenced one of the most important tasks of our legislative year — the debates, processing and subsequent approval of the national budget.

The 2008 Budget is particularly important as it will define the direction of the Yar'Adua administration and provide the resources for the execution of his 7-point agenda. This budget is also expected to establish the macroeconomic fundamentals that will lead to the achievement of a double digit growth rate for the first time.

However, for all these ideals to be achieved we need to ensure that the budget is faithfully implemented. This has been the bane of our budgets in the past. It is in this regard that I call on all committees to obtain information on the level of performance of 2006 and 2007 budgets. This is a major oversight function that must be speedily handled in tandem with the processing of the 2008 budget. The outcome of this exercise may lead to a lasting solution to this issue or at least enable us put in place measures to track the level of performance.

Distinguished colleagues, in evaluating this budget you will need to consider whether the revenue profile will provide enough funds to guaranty the implementation of the programmes of government. You will have to decide whether the infrastructural and development projects included in the budget cover the whole of the country as we are answerable to our constituents whenever their communities are left out.

The 2008 budget is targeted at the ordinary Nigerian and we know that our people are desirous of enjoying the benefits of good governance almost immediately, hence we need to act quickly to ensure that the budget is processed and passed within the next four weeks.

While you are doing that in your Committees, it may assist you if you simply just stick to three variables — our input, the output and outcomes of the budget. When you look at this over the medium-term expenditure profile, you would discover some of the points that you are looking for, that is, abandoned and uncompleted projects. The Public Accounts Committee would begin to look into what happens to those funds that are not used at the end of the year.

While you are also considering the review of the benchmark, also remember that capital projects in Nigeria over the past five years have only been operating in the region of about 60 to 70 per cent. What that basically means is that the capacity of the Executive to utilise those funds is between 60 and 70 per cent. So, while you are considering the review, please consider the fact that there is an office called Due Process that we need to look into very well, because it seems to be one office that affects greatly the capacity of the Executive to perform on any budget. It is a law that was established by the House of Representatives and the Senate. It is a law that we backed fully at the last Session.

With these few remarks, I now close the debate on the 2008 Appropriation Bill in Plenary. Good luck and God bless you all.

*Rt. Hon. Dimeji S. Bankole
Speaker*

Question that the Bill be now read a Second Time, put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second Time and referred to the Committee on Appropriations, with all other Standing Committees serving as Sub-Committees.

7. Extension of Sitting:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do suspend Order IV, Rule 4 to extend the Day's Sitting (Hon. Tunde Akogun).

Question put and agreed to.

House in Executive Session — 1.30p.m..

House in Plenary — 3.00 p.m.

8. Adjournment:

And it being 3.08 p.m. the House adjourned Sitting till Tuesday, 27 November, 2007 at 10.00 a.m.

Dimeji Sabur Bankole
Speaker