



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 21 November, 2007

1. The House met at 2.45 p.m. Mr Speaker read Prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
Mr Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 20 November 2007.

By unanimous consent, the Votes and Proceedings was adopted.
3. **Announcement:**
Obituary:
Mr Speaker read a letter from Hon. Ihiabe S.A Positive informing the House of the demise of Hon. Isaac R. Jimba, former Member of the House of Representatives (*Bassa/Dekina Federal Constituency*, 1999 - 2007) on 17 November, 2007. He will be buried at his residence in **Oguma**, Bassa Local Government Area of Kogi State on 1 December, 2007.

A minute in silence was observed in honour of the deceased.
4. **Petitions:**
Three petitions were received and referred to the Committee on Public Petitions:
 - (i) Hon. Bernard A. Udoh (*Scot Abasi/Mkpat Enin/Eastern Obolo Federal Constituency*), from Eight former staff of the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON), praying **the** House to intervene in their alleged wrongful disengagement from Service with a view to reinstating them;
 - (ii) Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon (*Oredo Federal Constituency*), from Benin National Congress, praying the House to investigate the systemic looting of Benin Artifacts from Benin Museum and to grant the reliefs sought in their petition;
 - (iii) **Hon. Tsegba Teruga** (*Gboko/Tarku Federal Constituency*), from C. T. Iyorkar on behalf of 10,000 pensioners of the Nigerian telecommunication Ltd (NITEL), praying the House to intervene in the unjust and unfair treatment the Pensioners suffered as a result of the sale of NITEL to Transcorp Plc and to grand the reliefs in their petition.
- 5- **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*).

Debate:

Debate adjourned till the next Legislative Day.

6. Consideration of Report

Ad-Hoc Committee on the Operation of GSM Networks:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do consider the Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Investigation into the decay of services provided by the Global System Mobile Telecommunication (GSM) Networks and approve the Recommendations therein" (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Question put and agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of Whole to consider the Report, put and agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(*Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair*)

REPORT OF THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE DECAY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GLOBAL SYSTEM MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION (GSM) NETWORKS

Recommendations (i):

In order to ensure quality service at all times, so that a regime of lower tariffs is enjoyed in Nigeria, collocation facilities, must be adopted by the industry now (*Hon. Leo Ogor*) — *Agreed, to.*

Recommendation (ii):

The role of interconnect exchange houses in reducing congestion on the network operators cannot be overemphasized. The NCC should immediately issue a directive to all network operators specifying interconnect exchanges as the approved path for handling inter-network traffic and compelling them to make use of existing licensed interconnect exchange houses. This will check call barring, by network operators and allow for concentration by network operators on intra network traffic (*Hon. Leo Ogor*) — *Agreed to.*

Recommendation (iii):

The regulatory authority in the telecommunications industry, that is the NCC must ensure that international call termination rates are not lower than local call termination rate to avoid restriction of local traffic on the network of GSM operators and to eliminate the loss to the national economy inherent in such a pricing structure (*Hon. Leo Ogor*) — *Agreed to.*

Recommendation (iv):

Convinced that the Universal Service Provision Fund (USP fund) can positively improve quality of service and the provisions of telecommunications to the rural, unserved and underserved areas, if the fund is properly applied, armed with competent knowledge that the USP fund has been shrouded in secrecy between 2001 to first half of 2006 where the USP fund Board never existed, we recommend that the USP fund be properly probed by the House Committee on Communications. GSM companies that have not paid their Annual Operation Levy (AOL) as stipulated by the NCC Act of 2003 must be sanctioned and made to pay their Annual Operation Levy (AOL) with interest at the prevailing lending rate (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Amendment Proposed:

In line 7, immediately after the figure "2003" *leave out* all the other words (*Hon. Sada Soli*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and negatived.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Recommendation (v):

As a matter of respect for the highest constituted authority in Nigeria that is, the office of the President and to demonstrate patriotism and commitment to the concern of the House of Representatives and other stakeholders to finding a lasting solution to the problem of poor quality of service, we recommend that the NCC should issue the 3G spectrum license to NIGCOMSAT as directed by the former president. Chief Olusegun Obasanjo and Federal Executive Council to enable the company provide last miles services. This, we hope would give room for competition, bringing down high tariff in line **with** the government deregulation policy (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Amendment Proposed:

In line 5, immediately after the words "directed by" *leave out the* words "former President" and *insert* the Word "**Government**" instead thereof (*Hon. Dino Melaye*).

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

Main Question as amended, put and agreed to.

Recommendation (vi):

Telecom is a major technical and engineering profession and only trained and experienced professionals can make optimum decisions. Problems being experienced today originated from poor planning and lack **of proper** control mechanism put in place from inception when license were issued to **the** GSM companies. It is important to note that the GSM companies are selling services they do not have. The poor quality of Telecom services cannot be corrected by incompetent planners. They would only exacerbate an already bad situation because of lack of know how (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out all the words in the Recommendation (*Hon. Stanley Ojajuruka*).

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

Recommendation (vii):

The Nigerian Communications Commission as presently constituted., lacks the competent personnel, **will** and capacity to enforce the provisions of the Act that sets it up and has shown in glaring terms its inability to provide adequate regulator}' oversight for the industry. The non adherence to budgetary provisions as stipulated by section 19 of the NCC Act of 2003 and the violation of Section 81 of the 1999 constitution is unacceptable. Accordingly, we recommend an immediate reorganization of the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) and the prosecution of the management by the office of the Attorney General of the Federation, for spending money that are supposed to be credited to the Federation Account without the approval of the National Assembly, as stipulated by Section 162 and section 81 of the 1999 Constitution (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Amendment Proposed:

Refer the Recommendation to the Committee on Communications for further investigation (*Hon. C. I. D. Maduabum*).

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

Recommendation (viii):

We also recommend a ban of 12 months on the sale of SIM Cards and organized promotions of all networks pending when quality of service improves (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Question put and negatived.

Recommendation (ix):

A review of the 2003 Communications Act, with immediate amendment is hereby recommended (*Hon. Leo Ogor*) — *Agreed to.*

Recommendation (x):

The committee recommends the immediate hand over of the 1st phase of the rural telephone project to N1GCOMSAT **that** will hook all the rural network to their satellite and connect them to the interconnect houses for connections to other networks for effective operations. The details could be worked out between the ministry of communications and that of Science and Technology (*Hon. Leo Ogor*) ~ Agreed to.

Recommendation (xi):

All the Government officials from the ministry of communications and the Due process office that were involved in the unauthorized release of the sum of N5,376,753,692.21 (Five billion, three hundred and seventy-six million, Seven hundred and fifty-three thousand, six hundred and ninety-two Naira, twenty one Kobo) to ZTE, Alcatel, Shangai Bell and Messrs Hauwei Technologies company Nig. Ltd without the approval of the National Assembly, which is a clear violation of section 81 of the 1999 Constitution should be prosecuted by the Office of the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice. This will serve as a deterrent to others (*Hon. Leo Ogor*).

Amendment Proposed:

Refer the Recommendation to the Committee on Communications for further investigation (*Hon. C. I. D. Maduabuni*).

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

Recommendation (xii):

The service providers must try and adopt the habit of out-sourcing their working requirement, radier than the spirit of do-it-alone because the outsourced providers will see themselves as partners in progress and will do **everything** possible to protect the equipment (*Hon. Leo Ogor*) — Agreed to.

Chairman to report proceedings.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in the Committee of Whole considered the Report of the *Ad-Hoc* Committee on **the** Investigation into the decay of services provided by the Global System Mobile Telecommunication (GSM) Networks and approved Recommendations (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv); amended Recommendation (v), deleted Recommendation (vi), referred Recommendation (vii) to the Committee on Communications for further investigation, rejected Recommendation (viii), approved Recommendations (ix) and (,y), referred Recommendation (x/) to the Committee on Communications **for** further investigation and approved Recommendation (xii).

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of Whole, put and agreed to.

7. Adjournment:

That this House do now adjourn till Thursday, 22 November, 2007 at 10.00 a.m. (*Hon. Tunde Akogun*).

Adjourned accordingly at 5.37 p.m.

Dimeji Sabur Bankole
Speaker