



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 5 March, 2008

1. The House met at 2.20 p.m. Mr Speaker read Prayers.
2. Oaths of Allegiance and Membership:
Member-elect, Ahmed Dayyabu Safana (*Batsari/Safana/Danmusa Federal Constituency*), took and subscribed the oaths as required by law.
3. Message:
(0 Mr Speaker read a message from the President, Commander-in-Chief, Federal Republic of Nigeria as follows:



PRESIDENT,

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

PRESI134

22nd February, 2008

*Hon. Dimeji Bankole, CFR
Speaker
House of Representatives,
National Assembly Complex,
Abuja.*

Excellency and dear brother,

RE: THE APPROPRIATION BILL 2008

/ refer to your letter No. NASS/CNA/I 15/VOL.21/66 of February 20, 2008, conveying the above Bill to me by the National Assembly for my signature.

I would like, first to congratulate the leadership and members of the National Assembly for the mature, diligent and committed way in which work on the 2008 Budget has progressed so far. I am sure we will all be judged well by history as helping to lay the foundation for a strong, stable and sustainable democracy for our country.

After a careful examination of the Bill, I would like to urge the members of the National Assembly to reconsider it in the following critical areas;

1. *The N28.33 billion shown as Special Presidential Intervention to the NDDC should be shown rather as Presidential Infrastructural Intervention in the Oil Producing States, as earlier conveyed by the Minister of Finance's letter dated December 22, 2007 (copy attached as Annex I).*
2. *Clause 13 requiring the Finance Minister to obtain the approval of the National Assembly before any expenditure vote is reduced, even in the event of revenue shortfalls, should be deleted.*
3. *The increase in the recurrent allocation for the Defence Forces amounting to N26.164 billion should be adjusted to N22.198 billion. The detailed breakdown of the increase required for the Defence forces is attached as Annex II.*
4. *National Assembly Budget:*
 - (a) *Recurrent Expenditure — this has been increased by 78%. **While** appreciating the reasons for some increase, especially due to the effort to ensure that no National Assembly Committee seeks the financial assistance of any MDA before embarking on any oversight function. I still believe that an increase of 1%% is far too high. In this respect, I would like to advise that the overall increase is kept to no more than 20 %.*
 - (b) *Capital Budget — I am informed by the Hon. Minister of Finance that the reasons that the National Assembly is asking for an increase here include:*
 - (i) *that the sum of N7 billion was returned unspent out of the 2007 capital budget of the National Assembly, and*
 - (ii) *that the new National Assembly building will require a considerable amount of furniture and equipment.*

Recognizing the validity of the above reasons, it is quite reasonable to increase the capital budget of the National Assembly from N6.6 billion in the draft budget I submitted to you to a total of billion.

Furthermore, in line with the principle of the separation of powers, I would like to leave it to the National Assembly to determine its priorities in allocating the sum of N15 billion, as well as to set up its own due process mechanism. I will, moreover, instruct the Finance Minister to effect releases of all monies due to the National Assembly subject to the availability of funds and in line with proper budgeting and accounting standards.

5. *Ministry of Transportation (FMOT) — I would want the N21.5 billion added to the recurrent vote of the FMOT of which, I am informed, N18 billion is for FERMA, to be removed. This is partly because we have concerns about the executive capacity of this agency as well as the procedure adopted for such an increase.*
6. *Other Specific expenditure Increases: the increase to the National Sports Commission (109% — recurrent; 714% — capital), Justice (148%), Code of Conduct Bureau (998%) and Police Service Commission (662%) should also be eliminated for the reasons given in paragraphs 5 above and 1 below.*
7. *General Capital Increase to the Capital Budget of the Executive Arm of Government — this has been increased overall by over N285.3 billion. My proposal here is that all the amount realized from the increase in the benchmark price from my proposed US\$53 .83/barrel to the National Assembly's figure of US\$59/barrel should be used wholly to eliminate the proposed deficit in the 2008 Budget.*

This will not only make the 2008 Budget balanced and more realistic but will create more room and opportunity for more informed capital spending especially on infrastructure under the Supplementary Budget that I intend to submit to you very soon. This will also provide both the Executive and the Legislature with an opportunity for greater dialogue and consultation, in order to arrive at, and agree on, capital spending priorities, well, before I formally submit the supplementary budget proposals for your consideration.

8. *Federal Government Independent Revenue — I notice also that this has been increased by about N100 billion. As the basis for such an increase is not yet available, it is difficult to appraise it. It is quite debatable, however, that such an increase can be achieved within a single year.*

I advise nevertheless that this also be discounted for now, so that it can, along with other possible additional revenue sources, be discussed and agreed, in the context of how to fund the supplementary budget.

I will like to conclude. Your Excellencies, the Senate President and Mr Speaker, by thanking you very much for the cooperation that I have enjoyed not only from you but also from your Membership. It is my hope that this spirit of cooperation will prevail and flourish in our effort to enthrone deep respect for, and abidance by, the Constitution, rule of law and accountability not only for the growth of democracy in Nigeria but also to the eternal benefit of the Nigerian people.

Yours most sincerely,

(Signed) UMARU
MUSA YAR'ADUA

(ii) Ad-Hoc Committee on Mr President's Observations on the 2008 Appropriations Bill:

Mr Speaker named the following Hon. Members to serve on the Ad-Hoc Committee:

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| (a) | Hon. Usman Nafada Bayero | — | Chairman |
| (b) | Hon. Festus Adegoke | — | Member |
| (c) | Hon. John Eno | — | Member |
| {d) | Hon. Terngu Tsegba | — | Member |
| (e) | Hon. Independence Ogunewe | — | Member |
| (f) | Hon. Farouk Lawan | — | Member |
| (g) | Hon. Yusuf Tuggar | — | Member |

4. Announcements:

(0) Obituary:

Mr Speaker announced the death of Senator Idris Kuta (*Niger East*, 1999 - 2007), former Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives between 1979 - 1983, which occurred on Saturday 1 March, 2008.

A minute in silence was observed in honour of the deceased.

(ii) Visitors:

Mr Speaker recognised the presence in the Gallery of:

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| (a) | Hon. Umar Gagogojo, Speaker, Katsina State House of Assembly, accompanied by some Members of the State House of Assembly and some Local Government Chairmen. |
| (b) | Mr Jide Kosoko, Chairman National Association of Nigeria Theatre Arts Practitioners. |

5. Petitions:

The following Petitions were received and referred to the House Committee on Public Petitions:

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| (0) | Hon. Tarn Brisibe (<i>Burutu Federal Constituency</i>), from disengaged temporary staff of NNPC, WRPC, PPMC and WZO, praying the House to intervene in their disengagement with a view to ensuring the payment of their entitlement; |
| (ii) | Hon. Abike Dabiri (<i>Ikorodu Federal Constituency</i>), from Bashorun J. K. Randle, OFR, seeking the intervention of the House in a case of inhuman treatment meted on him by the Police with a view to redressing the injustice done to him; |
| (iii) | Hon. Taiwo Oluyemi Adewale (<i>Ibarapa East/Ido Federal Constituency</i>), from Pastor Bari Oyeledun, Messrs E. A. Ajeigbe and Femi Adelugbaon behalf of 216 severed staff of the National Horticulture and Research Institute, praying the House to prevail on the Federal Ministry of Agriculture to comply with circular Ref: No. HCSF/C/626/5.2/11/274 of 28 April, 2008 and to grant other reliefs sought in their petition; |

- (iv) Hon. Patrick Obahiagbon (*Oredo Federal Constituency*), from the Benin National Congress, protesting the allocation to Ondo and Delta States, of revenues from Oil Wells which they alleged belong to Edo State and praying the House to redress the situation;
- (v) Hon. Ita Enang *Qtu/Ibiono Ibom Federal Constituency*), from Messrs I. A. Sani, P. E. Adim, E. E. Akpan and J. C. Merenini against alleged wrongful dismissal from service by the Federal Civil Service Commission and reinstate them;
- (vi) Hon. Gbenga Makanjuola (*Ekiti/Isin/Irepodun/Oke-Ero Federal Constituency*), from Kwara State Cocoa Farmers Association in Ogun State against their alleged wrongful disengagement from their farmland in Ogun State and to restore them to their land.

6. Matters of Urgent Public Importance:

Pursuant to Order VIII, Rule 4 (1), (3) the following matters were brought before the House;

- (0 Hon. Abdukareen Saliu drew the attention of the House to the recent killing and arson in Ogaminana Town of Adavi Local Government Area of Kogi State by Anti-Riot Policemen. He urged the House to consider the matter as one of Urgent Public Importance.

Question that the matter be considered as one of Urgent Public Importance, put and agreed to. Matter

to stand over till the next Legislative Day.

- (ii) Hon. Clever Ikisikpo drew the attention of **the** House to the importation of contaminated fuel into the country which had caused a lot of damage to vehicles. He stated that the regulatory agencies had failed in their responsibility and urged the House to consider the issue as a Matter of Urgent Public Importance.

Question that the matter be considered as one of Urgent Public Importance, put and agreed to.

Matter to stand over till the next Legislative Day.

7. Presentation of Bills:

- (i) Physically Challenged Persons Trust Fund (Establishment) Bill, 2008 — *Read the First Time*;
- (ii) Prisons Bill, 2008 — *Read the First Time*;
- (iii) Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas (Fiscal Incentive Guarantees and Assurances) (Amendment) Bill, 2008 — *Read the First Time*.

8. Illegal Production of Fake Drivers Licence in Nigeria:

The House:

Notes that pursuant to the Federal Road Safety Commission Act, 1988 the Commission is vested with the responsibility of producing Drivers' licence and maintenance of safety standards on our roads according to International best practices;

Further notes that some unscrupulous Nigerians have embarked on illegal production of fake drivers licence in the country;

Worried that this ugly trend has the potential of reducing government revenue;

Concerned that the driver's licence is a sensitive and an essential means of identification in Nigeria and production of fake licence would lead to massive impersonation and monumental financial fraud to the economy;

Disturbed that most accidents on our roads are partly caused by reckless driving by unqualified drivers who have obtained driver's licences illegally;

Resolves to:

Mandate the House Committee on Governmental Affairs to investigate and identify those persons, groups of persons or corporate bodies responsible for this dastardly act and make recommendations on the best ways to forestall the production of such fake drivers' licences (*Hon. Leo Ogor and 10 Others*).

Amendments Proposed:

(i) *Insert* a new Prayer (*if*) as follows:

"Urge the Federal Road Safety Commission to live up to its responsibility by arresting and prosecuting all issuers and users of fake driver's licence" (*Hon. Friday Itulah*).

Question put and negated.

(ii) *Insert* a new Prayer (*u*) as follows:

"Urge the Road Safety Commission **to** improve and build mechanisms to prevent the forgery **of** Drivers Licences and to investigate the issuance of fake licences" (*Hon. Betty Apiafi*).

Question put and negated.

(iii) *Insert* a new Prayer (*if*) as follows:

"Further urge all security agencies to make use of electronic devices to detect fake drivers licences or any form of irregularities" (*Hon. Uche Ekwunife*).

Question put and negated. Main

Question put and negated.

9. **A Bill for an Act to Amend the Students Union Activities (Control and Regulation) Act, Cap. S14 Laws of Federation, 2004 to Empower Institutions Highest Governing Body to Sanction Students and Bodies and Remove Clauses which Infringe on the Fundamental Human Rights of Students, 2008 — Second Reading:**

Order read; deferred.

10. Adjournment:

That this House do now adjourn till Thursday, 6 March, 2008 at 10.00 a.m. (*Hon. Shehu Baba Agate*).

Adjourned accordingly at 3.53 p.m.

Dimeji Sabur Bankole
Speaker