



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

SECOND VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 2 June, 2004

1. The House met at 3.10 p.m. Mr Speaker took the Chair.
2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
Mr Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the First Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 2 June, 2004.
By unanimous consent, the First Votes and Proceedings were adopted.
3. **Address by Speaker:**
Mr Speaker addressed the House as follows:

**END OF SESSION ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE SPEAKER OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, ALHAJI AMINU BELLO MASARI, AT THE
END OF THE 1ST LEGISLATIVE SESSION ON WEDNESDAY, 2ND JUNE, 2004.**

Hon. Members, we have come to the end of the first legislative Session of the Second National Assembly of the Fourth Republic—We started this journey on 3rd of June 2003, when the present Assembly was inaugurated. Most of us took our oath of Office on that day and pledged to serve our nation by making good laws for the benefit of the People of Nigeria. I also recall that on the said date of our inauguration, by unanimous consent you gave me and the Deputy Speaker, the mandate to lead this Honourable House. Once again, I thank you for the mandate. I also thank you for your selfless service to your Fatherland during that 12 Months.

Although one year is not a sufficient period to scientifically evaluate and determine the success otherwise of a busy and complex Assembly like ours, with a four year tenure, it is nonetheless a sufficient period for self appraisal, and review of our major activities, with a view to determining, whether or not, we require some self assessment in the strategies we adopt for the realisation of our Constitutional mandate.

Whereas, the Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria provides that we should seal for a minimum number of 180 days in a year, this Honourable House recorded a total of 215 day of sitting during the session.

Honourable Members, please permit me to briefly review our major activities during the session as thus:

BILLS AND TREATIES

The primary responsibility of the House is to make good laws for the Socio-Economic development of the people of Nigeria and for the protection of lives and properties.

Throughout the period under review, the House was conscious of this responsibility. Despite & limitation of the resources at our disposal, we did our best to discharge our primary responsibility of Law-Making.

During the Period 99 Bills were introduced in the House.

Out of these Bills, we have been able to pass and ratify 26 Bills, Treaties and Protocols (twenty-six) into law. We have also considered 75 Motions and received 143 (one hundred and forty-three) Public Petitions. Details of the Status of the Bills and Motions either passed, received, pending or otherwise dealt with, are hereunder given:

A. *BILLS PASSED AND TREATIES RATIFIED IN THE FIRST SESSION FROM JUNE 2003 - JUNE 2, 2004: 26*

- 1 *Federal Capital Territory Hospital Management (Establishment, etc.) Bill 2003 (HB. 26)* 16/12/2003
- 2 *Federal Capital Territory Board of Internal Revenue (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2003 (HB. 27)* 16/12/2003
- 3 *Federal Capital Territory Primary Education Board Bill, 2003 (HB. 28)* 16/12/2003
- 4 *Federal Capital Territory Water Board (Establishment, etc.) Bill 2003 (HB. 29)* 16/12/2003
- 5 *Compulsory, Free Universal Basic Education (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 36)* 37630
- 6 *Privatisation and Commercialisation (Public Enterprises), Bill, 2003 (HB. 38)* 14/10/2003
- 7 *Treaty to Establish the African Union (Ratification and Jurisdiction) Bill, 2003 (HB.9)* Ratified on 9/12/2003
- 8 *United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 13)* Ratified on 17/12/2003
- 9 *National Gallery of Art (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 19)* 17/12/2003
- 10 *Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2003 (HB. 44)* 37663
- 11 *Economic and Finance Crimes Commission (Establishment, etc) Bill, 2003 (HB. 49)* 16/12/2003
- 12 *Money Laundering (Prohibition) Bill, 2003 (HB. 50)* 16/12/2003
- 13 *Appropriation Bill, 2004 (HB. 63)* 17/3/2004
- 14 *Allocation of Revenue (Abolition of Dichotomy in the Application of the Principle of Derivation Bill, 2003 (HB. 61)* 38261
- 15 *African Economic Community Relating to the Pan African Parliament (Accession and Jurisdiction) Bill, 2004 (HB. 79)* Ratified 9/3/2004
- 16 *Electoral Act, 2002 (Amendment) Bill, 2004 (SB. 63)* 18/5/2004
- 17 *Small and Medium Scale Enterprises Development Agency (Amendment) Bill, 2004 (HB. 72)* 18/5/2004
- 18 *Federal Capital Territory Appropriation Bill, 2004 (HB. 83)* 20/5/2004
- 19 *Treaty between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe on the Joint Development of Petroleum and other Resources in Areas of the Exclusive Economic Zone of the two States (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 12)* Ratified on 1/6/2004
- 20 *Convention on the Prohibition of Development, Production, Stockpiling and use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (Ratification and Enforcement) (HB. 17)*
- 21 *Extradition between the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Government of the Republic of South Africa (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 1)* Ratified on 1/6/2004
- 22 *Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters between the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Government of the Republic of the South Africa (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 2)* Ratified on 1/6/2004
- 23 *Rome Status of the International Criminal Court (Ratification and Jurisdiction) Bill, 2003 (HB. 8)* Ratified on 1/6/2004

- 24 **Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 10)** Ratified on 1/6/2004
- 25 **Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 11)** Ratified on 1/6/2004
- 26 **Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemical and Pesticides in International Trade (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 18)** Ratified on 1/6/2004

B. BILLS AWAITING SECOND READING: 18

S/No.	Title of Bill	Date Introduced
1	Niger-Delta Development Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 16)	37748
2	Guaranteed Minimum Price for Farmers Authority Bill, 2003 (HB. 24)	27/8/2003
3	Allocation of Revenue (Federation Account) Bill, 2003 (HB. 37)	24/9/2003
4	National Social Security Board Bill, 2003 (HB. 32)	28/10/2003
5	Acts Authentication Act (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (SB. 13)	37875
6	Erosion and Floods Control Commission Bill, 2003 (HB. 45)	37935
7	Chartered Institute of Aviation Management of Nigeria Bill, 2003 (HB. 46)	37935
8	Maritime Defence Levies Bill, 2003 (HB. 51)	16/12/2003
9	Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Management Bill, 2003 (HB. 53)	16/12/2003
10	Battered Women Support Services Bill, 2003 (HB. 54)	16/12/2003
11	Fire (Precaution and Control) Bill, 2003 (HB. 59)	38352
12	Electricity Power Sector Reform Bill, 2003	20/1/2004
13	Remuneration of Former Presidents and Heads of State (and other Ancillary Matters) Bill, 2003 (HB. 58)	20/1/2004
14	Finance (Miscellaneous Taxation Provision) Bill, 2004 (HB. 70)	38261
15	Mandatory Treatment for Non-Discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS, 2004 (HB. 64)	38019
16	Federal Environmental Protection Agency (Repeal) Bill, 2004 (HB. 66)	37654
17	Industrial Waste Water Pollution etc. (Control) Bill, 2004 (HB. 68)	38019
18	Electronic Messages, Information and Commerce and its Admissibility in Evidence Bill, 2004 (HB. 69)	38019

C. NUMBER OF BILLS REFERRED AND PENDING IN COMMITTEES: 12

S/No.	Title of Bill	Committee(s)
1	Nigerian Institute of Animal Science, 2003 (HB. 3)	Agriculture
2	Convention on the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 14)	Justice and Environment

3	<i>Constitution and Convention of the African of the African Telecommunications Union (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2003 (HB. 15)</i>	<i>Justice, Communications and Co-operation and Integration in Africa</i>
4	<i>Lobbyist Registration Bill, 2003 (HB. 20)</i>	<i>Justice</i>
5	<i>Agriculture Input (Provision of Subsidy) Bill, 2003 (HB. 21)</i>	<i>Agriculture and Finance</i>
6	<i>Agriculture (Provision of Budget Allocation) Bill, 2003 (HB. 25)</i>	<i>Agriculture and Finance</i>
7	<i>Palm Oil Development Fund Bill, 2003 (HB. 30)</i>	<i>Education, Justice, Human Rights and Legal Matters</i>
8	<i>Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB.35)</i>	<i>Agriculture, Finance and Justice</i>
9	<i>Armed Forces Service Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 34)</i>	<i>Defence, Army, Navy and Air Force</i>
10	<i>Handicapped Persons (Public Buildings) Special Facilities Bill, 2003 (HB. 31)</i>	<i>Women Affairs and Youth Development</i>
11	<i>Chartered Institute of Certified Secretaries and Reporters of Nigeria Bill, 2003 (HB. 43)</i>	<i>Public Service Matters</i>
12	<i>Federal Road Safety Commission (Amendment) Bill, 20203 (HB. 52)</i>	<i>Governmental Affairs and Justice</i>
13	<i>Corrosive Acid Prohibition from sale Bill, 2003 (HB. 56)</i>	<i>Health and Justice</i>
14	<i>Cult and Secret Society (Prohibition) Bill, 2003 (HB. 57)</i>	<i>Justice and Human Rights</i>
15	<i>Nigerian Content Development Bill, 2003 (HB. 33)</i>	<i>Petroleum Refineries and Products Marketing, Petroleum Resources, and Justice</i>
16	<i>National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 47)</i>	<i>Narcotic Drugs and Financial Crimes, Health</i>
17	<i>Environmental Managers Registration Council of Nigeria Bill, 2003 (HB. 60)</i>	<i>Justice and Environment</i>
18	<i>Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Nigeria, Bill 2003 (HB. 55)</i>	<i>Public Accounts and Justice</i>
19	<i>National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency Bill, 2004 (HB. 71)</i>	<i>Environment, Petroleum Resources and Justice</i>
20	<i>International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2004</i>	<i>Petroleum Resources, Petroleum Refineries and Justice</i>
21	<i>International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1971 as Amended (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2004</i>	<i>Petroleum Resources, Petroleum Refineries and Justice</i>
22	<i>Revenue Allocation to Local Governments and Area Council (Federation Account etc) Bill, 2004</i>	<i>Justice, Finance, States and Local Governments</i>

D. *BILLS REPORTED OUT OF COMMITTEE AND LAID ON TABLE: 5*

S/No. Title of Bill

a. *National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Bill, 2003 (HB. 7)*

b. *Freedom of Information Bill, 2003 (HB. 6)*

c. **Pension Reform Bill, 2003 (HB. 40)**

d. **Nigerian Institute of Animal Science Bill, 2003 (HB. 3)**

e. **Agriculture Input (Provision of Subsidy) Bill, 2003 (HB. 21)**

f. **Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme Fund (Amendment) Bill, 2003 (HB. 35)**

E. REPORT ON MOTIONS CONSIDERED IN THE FIRST SESSION, JUNE 2003 - 2 JUNE 2004

S/No.	Title of Motion	Remarks
1	Need to Condemn the Gruesome Murder of Six indigenes of Bauchi State in Lantang North Local Government Area of Plateau State	House to send a high-powered delegation to visit the Emir and people of Ningi to commiserate with families of the affected persons.
2	Increase in Prices of Petroleum Products	Deputy Speaker informed the House that the Technical Committee met with Mr. President and some Executive Council members of the Nigerian Labour Congress 2/7/2003
3	Appointment, Remuneration and Allowances of Special Adviser	The President of the Federal Republic of Nigerian to appoint 15 Special Adviser to assist him in the performance of his functions and the remuneration of Public and Political Office Holders Act, 2002
4	Proposed Strike by the NLC on Monday, 30 June, 2003	Mandate the leadership of the House to intervene in the crisis through the process of dialogue with Government and the Nigeria Labour Congress with a view to averting the strike action scheduled for Monday, 30 June, 2003.
5	Pipeline Fire outbreak in Isikwuato in Abia North Senatorial District of Abia State	Send a high powered delegation of Members of the House to commiserate with the people and Government of Abia State.
6	Suspended Strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU)	Mandate the House Committee on Education to liaise with relevant bodies within the University system and the Education sub-sector so as to explore new strategies aimed at putting an end to the dislocations in University Education in the Country.
7	Increase in the Prices of Petroleum Products	House to carry out a thorough investigation of the activities, finances, operation of the NNPC and all other Government Agencies in the Petroleum Industries for the purpose of exposing corruption, inefficiency or waste in any of the said Agencies and reorganisation and restructuring of the NNPC and other Petroleum Agencies.
8	Outbreak of Hostilities between Ogori and Ekpedo Communities in Kogi States	Direct Committees on Special Duties, Peace and Reconciliation to report their findings to the House within one month.
9	Attempted Undemocratic change of Power in Anambra State	House constitute a Special Committee to investigate the circumstance leading to the abduction of the Governor of Anambra State and his purported resignation and report the House within seven days
10	Immediate Sale of Fertilizer to Farmers	Direct the Joint Committees on Agriculture and Rural Development to ascertain the root causes of the perennial shortage of fertilizer and recommend measures to ensure adequate supply of fertilizer to farmers.

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| 11 | <i>Procurement of vehicles for the 8th All Africa Games</i> | <i>Mandate Joint Committees on Sports and Social Development and Industries to investigate the agreement between Coscharis (BMW) and COJA to determine its benefits or otherwise to the Country.</i> |
| 12 | <i>Burning of all Nigeria People Party National Headquarters, Abuja</i> | <i>Mandate the leadership of the House to visit and commiserate with the National leadership of the All Nigeria People Party.</i> |
| 13 | <i>Flood, Erosion and Landslide in Obudu, Cross Rivers State</i> | <i>Mandate the House Committee on Environment to visit the affected areas and assess the extent of destruction as well as commiserate with the Government of Cross River State and victims of the disaster.</i> |
| 14 | <i>Reconstitution of National Assembly Joint Committee on the Review of the 1999 Constitution</i> | <i>Reconstitute the Joint Committee of the National Assembly on the review of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.</i> |
| 15 | <i>Operation Lapses in GSM system in Nigeria</i> | <i>Mandate House Committee on Communications to conduct investigations into the problems of GSM Operations in Nigeria and report to the House within four weeks</i> |
| 16 | <i>Magnetization for Car Allowance</i> | <i>Deduction of the car allowance from the salaries of members be suspended until clarification is received from the RMAFC.</i> |
| 17 | <i>The lingering Warri Crisis</i> | <i>Mandate house Committee on Peace and Reconciliation and National Security to investigate the immediate and remote causes of this conflicts with a view a view to finding lasting solution to these crises.</i> |
| 18 | <i>Polio Vaccines Controversy</i> | <i>Mandate House Committee on Health to investigate the controversy over polio vaccines in Nigeria with a view to assuring the public of the potency of polio immunization exercise in Nigeria and report to the House within 8 weeks.</i> |
| 19 | <i>Oil Museum Project</i> | <i>Mandate the Committees on Petroleum Refineries, Culture and Tourism and NDDC to visit the project site and Report to the House</i> |
| 20 | <i>Need to Monitor Operations of the Federal Road Maintenance Agency and Ensure Accountability of Funds realized from Toll Gates</i> | <i>Consideration aefferred 20/8/2003.</i> |
| 21 | <i>Need to Resuscitate the Lake Chad Basin</i> | <i>House to set up a sub-regional inter-parliamentary Committee of not more than five members of the National Assembly i.e. from the Senate and the House, the Honourable Minister of Water Resources, and two members from each of the parliaments of the other member-nations to help the Commission in lobbying for assistance from international donor agencies, governments of the members nations, etc.</i> |
| 22 | <i>Adoption of Special Order 1/2003</i> | <i>Consideration of motion deferred.</i> |
| 23 | <i>Provision of Medical Services to Accident Victims without necessary Police report</i> | <i>Mandate the House Committee on Police Affairs and Health to investigate the origin and rationale of this policy and propose a humane and easier procedure for handling accident victims at private and public hospitals.</i> |

24 Rehabilitation of Federal Roads in Rebel States via Appropriation Acts, 2001 and 2002

Debate adjourned 27/8/2003

25 Unsatisfactory and Defective Renovation Work on the Legislative Quarters, Apo, Abuja

Debate adjourned to enable officials of FCDA inspect and complete work on the Quarters 28/9/2003

26 Armed Robbery Attack on the Governor of Niger State

Mandate the leadership of the House to visit and commiserate with the Governor and people of Niger State over the incident.

27 Gully Erosion in Kumo Town

Mandate the House Committee on Environment to visit the affect area and assess the extent of damage caused by erosion in Kumo Town.

28 Disaster from Hydro-Electric Power Dam at Shiroro, Niger State

Relevant Committee of the House be empowered to conduct an investigation in order to identify avoidable and unavoidable causes of the disaster and post impact assessment be carried out and recommendations be made to Committee on Environment for follow up actions.

29 Special Operations to Combat Armed Banditry/Robbery in North-East Nigeria

The Federal Government to direct appropriate Security agencies to undertake investigative security operations that will unravel the identities of the kingpins and receivers of stolen property who are sponsoring the hoodlums that are physically committing these criminals acts with a view to bringing them to book in the affected areas and in the entire Federation.

30 Investigation into the Activities of Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)

The Managing Director of NNPC and other Directors of the Organisation be invited to appear before a Joint Session of the National Assembly on Tuesday, 30 September, 2003.

31 Sudden Increase in the Prices of Petroleum Products

That whoever was instrumental to the adjustment of the pump price of the PMS from N34-N40 should reverse it in the interest of the Citizens of this Nation and the PPPRA should tender unreserved apology to Nigerians.

32 Sudden Increase in Prices of Petroleum Products

House kicked against the 100% Importation reliance on refined Products.

33 Urging the relevant Authorities in Nigeria to Conduct Local Government Elections without further delay

Direct INCE to conduct elections into the Area Councils within the PCT on or before 31 December, 2003.

34 Abuse of Expatriate Quota and Business Permits

Mandated the House Committee on Internal affairs to thoroughly investigate all allegations of Business permits/Expatriate Quota Abuses and determine the level of due process involved in the grant of such permit/quota.

35 Rehabilitation of Ogbakiri Town in Rivers State torn by Communal Conflict

Condemn the communal clashes and mandate the Committee on Peace and National Reconciliation to visit and commiserate with the people of Ogbakiri and preach to them the gospel of peace and harmonious co-existence among brothers.

- 36 **Matter of urgent importance: Need for urgent necessary measures to curb the menace of Armed Robberies and Assassinations in Nigeria**
Resolves to appropriate funds in the Budget in line with (i) and (ii) 11th November 2003 Votes and proceedings.
- 37 **Complete Rehabilitation of Delta Steel Company, Aladja**
Mandate the House Committee on Steel to investigate the alleged irregularities that has affected the proper execution of sundry projects by the Company.
- 38 **Virement of the sum of ₦1,330,000,000.00**
That the sum of ₦600,000,000 meant for projects that are not on going within the South-East Zone be reassigned for the repair works on Ikot-Ekpene - Aba - Owerri-Orlu-Uga-Nnewi-Oba Road and Oba - Azumini - Ohanbele - Obohia - Uhuru - Ugwunagbo-Ihie Express Road; Ihiala-Orulu-Umuduru Road; Umudhia - Oboro - Owerri Road; and Ihube-Umekmai Road while the balance of ₦730,000,000 be distributed to other on-going projects in the South-East Zone that require additional funding.
- 39 **Virement of the sum of ₦11,898,000,000.00**
That the sum of ₦12,613,000,000 which was meant for projects that are not on going nation wide be re-assignment for the repair and construction works on the on going projects.
- 40 **Victorious Ehyingba Football Club of Abia State**
Resolved to send a congratulatory message to the Governor and People of Abia State.
- 41 **Petroleum Tax for Road Maintenance**
Declare the imposition of ₦1.50 tax by Mr. President as unconstitutional, illegal and oppressive and call on Mr President to stop the levy forthwith.
- 42 **Assassination attempt on the Governor of Benue State, His Excellency Mr George Akume**
Call on the Nigerian Police and all Security Agencies to track down the perpetrators of this act and bring them to Justice.
- 43 **Burning of NAFDAC Offices and Installations in Lagos and Kaduna**
Mandate the House Committee on Health to commiserate and liaise with NAFDAC offices in Lagos and Kaduna.
- 44 **Queller Bird s and Locust of Farmland in 15 Local Government Areas of Sokoto, Kebbi and Zamfara States**
Direct the House Committee on Agriculture to visit the affected States to carry out an on-the spot assessment of the problem and report to the House.
- 45 **Security situation in the Country**
Committee of Whole asked questions and receive briefings from the Inspector General of Police Affairs, National Security and Intelligence, Internal Affairs, Army, Navy and Air Force was set up to plan for a Conference of Stakeholder to enable the House produce a blue print on the security situation in the Country (see details in Official Report of 16/3/2004).
- 46 **Death of Hon. Maurice Ibekwe**
Constitute a panel drawn from the House Committees on Human Rights, Judiciary, Justice, Internal Affairs, Health and Drugs and Narcotic to investigate the circumstances of his death and report to the House with 30 days.

Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offenses Act, 1995 Amendment, 101-284-

47. Assault of Hon. Bako Sarai and Member of Mandate the Leadership
his Campaign Team by the APC and the letter to the Governor of K
Security detail to the Governor of Kano State incident and invite the Insp

disgust to the over the inc

48 **Unlawful Detention of the Deputy Governor of Delta State by the Police** **Call on for the unconditional Governor of Delta State by Police and urge the Inspector**

at all times in the court
duties

49 Secretary, CPAS, 114 Madison Street, New York, New York

[illegible]

action to House Committee work through facilities provided by the House and Senate.

50 Conduct of the Affairs of the National Automotive Council That the Public Accounts Commission be mandate to carry out a

pursuant to Sections 88

Constitution of the Federal

Ministry of Industries and Commerce

Committee shall be in

Members have been considered on their legislative duties, on the legislative process and on their responsibilities and on Legislative Ethics and Privileges. By the time we go on to the second session, all Members would be familiar with the legislative process and the responsibilities of Members.

BILLS AWAITING GAZETTING

2. **Remuneration of former Presidents Auxiliary Matters Bill, 2003**
The Fire Precaution and Control Bill, 2003

4. *The National Centre for Information Technology Bill, 2004*

5. *The Tobacco Smoking Control (Amendment) Bill, 2004.* 2004. 101st Congress, 2d Sess. 109-100. H.R. 100.

6. *National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency Bill, 2004.* 2004. 108th Congress, 2d Sess. 108-100. H.R. 100.

8 *The Small Business Administration (Establishment, etc.) Bill*

9. **Electric Power Sector Reform Bill, 2004**

10. **Petroleum Products Pricing Regulatory Agency (Established 2004).** The way and manner this regulatory agency has been set up as the "People's Parliament". The way and manner this regulatory agency has been set up as the "People's Parliament". The way and manner this regulatory agency has been set up as the "People's Parliament".

12. Journalism Practice Enhancement Bill, 2004

13. **Indigenous Oil Companies (Regulation and Terms) Bill, 2004.**

15. **Federal Character Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2004.**

17. **Security Services Welfare Infrastructure Development Committee**

18. **Armed Forces (Secondary Role) Bill, 2004.**

20. **Refineries and Products Regulatory Commission Bill, 2004.**

21. *Law Enforcement Official Code of Conduct Bill, 2004.*
22. *Infrastructure Concession Regulatory Bill, 2004.*

224 *Hydrobiologia: General Ecology*

23. *Advance Fee Fraud and Other Fraud Related Offences Act, 1995 (Amendment) Bill, 2004.*
24. *A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Establishment of Nigeria National Commission for United Nations Federation Scientific and Cultural Organization in the Federal Republic of Nigeria and for Purposes Connected Therewith.*

Honourable Members that the bulk of our work—as a Legislative body—is done at Committee level. Consequently, we have had to increase the number of House Committees from 68 (Sixty-Eight) to 71 (Seventy-One) by creation of 3 New Committees namely Committee on Pension in order to achieve thoroughness in the handling of legislative matters in this Honourable House. Necessary consultations are still going on—with a view to constituting the leadership of these Committees, which will be inaugurated as soon as we resume from our annual recess.

During the Session under review, Committees operated in the House of Representatives—under very difficult situations and circumstances. Many of our Committee Chairmen have no offices—let alone Office Equipment and Supplies—throughout the Session under review. The uncooperative attitude of some Federal Ministries, Parastatals, Agencies and Organizations, which we are supposed to oversee, had in some cases made Committee-work quite odious. Nonetheless, our experience in the last 12 months has demonstrated clearly that the Committee System in our Legislature has afforded many Nigerians the opportunity to express their views on important policy matters affecting this country. Nigerians have expressed themselves through newspaper publications in reaction to House Committee work, through facilities provided by Public Hearings organized by House Committees and through the course of Investigations and other oversight activities conducted by House Committees.

The leadership of the House will work assiduously towards providing adequate Office Accommodation, Equipment and Supplies for the full functioning of all House Committees in the months ahead. We are aware that the Committees are more or less generally handicapped but comparatively, the Committees are better off. At least they have steady allocation of funds.

The House of Representatives has been very peaceful and quite stable throughout the period under review. All Honourable Members have been well sensitized on their legislative duties, on the legislative process and procedures, on their responsibilities and on Legislative Ethics and Privileges. By the time we go on retreat, after this impending recess, all Honourable Members would be further equipped to face legislative duties, function, roles and challenges with the required confidence that would empower us to shove away budgetary constraints and provide more money for the legislative activities of this Honourable House.

Already, it is on record that we played very direct and urgent roles in the resolution of major conflicts in this country—during the period under review—using our Standing and Ad-Hoc Committees. You will recall that this Honourable House set up some Ad-Hoc Committees to study and stem the lingering ethno-religious conflicts in Plateau State, the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) strikes, the Anambra State Political Crises, Pipeline Fire—Outbreaks in Abia State and Land Border clashes in Kogi and Edo States. This Honourable House has Committed a lot of resources into the resolution of some of these conflicts, issues and problems; and the reports of most of the Ad-Hoc Committees were timeously submitted, thoroughly debated by this Honourable House before being adopted.

The Legislative Session under review was quite a challenging one; but the position, which this Honourable House took during the various crises that racked this country and threatened our democracy, has made Nigerians accept us as the "People's Parliament". The way and manner this Honourable House has attended to national issues, so far, have made Nigerians to develop confidence in the democratic structures and institutions in this country. For instance, you will recall that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, presented Year- 2004 Appropriation Bill to this Honourable House on the 18th of December, 2003 and we devoted all our energy and time to consider the Bill. When the House-Plenary-consideration of the said Appropriation Bill had to be suspended, sometimes for weeks, in order to achieve further consultations and inputs from the Federal Ministry of Finance and other stakeholders, we did all that was possible to study the Year- 2004 Appropriation Bill at Committee level. Eventually, when the Bill was passed on the 17th of March, 2004, Nigerians observed that good work had been accomplished by your Honourable selves. The President of Federal Republic of Nigeria has also adjudged the Year-2004 Appropriation Bill as the best handled, since Nigeria's democracy, in terms of Executive-Legislative joint-collaboration. It was in the same spirit that we considered and passed Year-2004 Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Appropriation Bill.

Honourable Members, National Budgets set the pace for national economic growth and development. They set out the direction and the course for fiscal policies. You can, therefore, assess the qualities and magnitude of your Honourable contributions to Nigeria's Gross National Economic Growth and Development—especially

when you remember that in the previous years, particularly during the last four years, Year-2000 to Year-2003 Budgets, almost got stuck in our Chambers because of rancour between the Executive and the Legislative Arms of Government this is now history.

It has become imperative for all Federal Government Ministries, Parastatals, Agencies and Organizations to render one form of report or the other to the National Assembly on the releases and expenditure—before subsequent releases of funds are made. Indeed, efforts are already being made towards the enactment of a Budget Law that should stipulate the functions and limits of all Nigerian economic stakeholders, in order to eliminate frictions in the course of Budget-consideration and passage.

Honourable Ladies And Gentlemen, this House of Representatives, the "Peoples Parliament"—has consistently demonstrated its independence. We have honestly exercised appropriate checks and balances on both the Executive and the Judicial Arms of Government. We have even exercised required checks and balances on ourselves. We have done all these with due caution and determined sense of maturity and patriotism. We have done our work in these regards without compromising the liberty and the socio-economic interests of the good people of this country. So, we have not been very rigid in the application of these principles and practices of separation of power and checks and balances—because head or tail, we are serving the interest of a people with one destiny. Consequently, there has NOT been any need for undue conflicts and confrontation between the Executive and the Legislative Arms of Government. For recognizing this and working against extreme conflicts and confrontations in Government business, I doff my hat for you all, Honourable Ladies and Gentlemen. I must praise you for the restraint and caution, which you have collectively exercised so far—in the use of our Constitutional powers and in the application of the principles of Separation of powers and Checks and Balances.

Honourable Members, this my Address is supposed or intended to serve as an assessment of our performances, during the Session under review. We have really achieved a great deal for the good people of this country; but my intention is to give account of our stewardship in a way that should draw attention to the relevance of our collective experiences during this out-going First Legislative Year-2003/2004. My intention is to make our experiences serve as yard-sticks, which our Constituents and Nigerians could use in the objective appraisal of our contributions towards the advancement of democratic cultures, principles, structures and practices in Nigeria. Prior to this Session, democracy had been on trial. What we have done, Honourable Colleagues, is to consolidate democratic gains and spread democratic dividends with the way and manner we have sought to make laws for this Country. Posterity will judge us right—as we have, during this outgoing Session acted as watchdogs to all Arms of Government—including ourselves. You might wish to recall how we frowned at the indolence exhibited by some of our Committees and even went ahead to discharge them of their original jurisdictions over Bills, activities and assignments referred to them—because of late performance.

Honourable Ladies and Gentlemen, we discharged our own Committees because we are very conscious of making favourable impacts on the good people of Nigeria. We intend to pursue our vision for a vibrant House of Representatives. We plan to introduce some changes and innovations that should enable this Honourable House to take its rightful place in the comity of world legislatures. In this connection, Computers would be installed and used in this Chamber in order to facilitate the viewing and accessing by all Honourable Members, of Bills, Amendments on Bills, Motions, Resolutions, Petitions and other relevant information. The idea is for us to reduce the quantity of paper currently being used in this Honorable House and improve on the quality of our work during the next Session. Furthermore, we would work towards making a Consortium of reputable broadcasters to handle the broadcasting of proceedings in the Honourable House - with a view to achieving legislative, education of Nigerian public. At the moment, the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) broadcasts the "House Ticket," but we need our own broadcasting outfit—from where it would beam information to Honourable Members and Staff of this Honourable House and transmit their inputs to us. We find the need for Parliamentary Broadcasting, which should be able to transmit live-broadcasts of House Proceedings and enable you, Honourable Members, to consider our debates from your offices and homes.

Most Parliaments in the world today, have their proceedings on the Internet and are easily accessible on Web-sites. In the House of Commons and in the Indian Parliament, distribution of Votes And Proceedings, Order Papers, Notice Papers, Bills, Motions, Resolutions and sundry legislative documents are done via the Internet. The archaic and laborious methods of distributing papers and legislative documents should give way to Honourable Members accessing these legislative papers and documents from the Internet. It is not good enough that National Assembly does not even have a web-site of its own, at the moment. We intend to look into these Information Technology areas in the Sessions ahead.

Finally, Hon. colleagues, I urge all Committees and Members to whom Bills, reports, and other matters were referred to complete them for presentation to the House within the first week of our resumption. Otherwise we will again discharge them of jurisdiction and bring up the matters for consideration in the Committees of the Whole as we did earlier.

I thank you all for your attention, and wish you a refreshing end of Session recess.

Thanks.

Hon. Aminu Bello Masari.

4. Adjournment:

That this House do now adjourn for recess till Tuesday, 20 July, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. (Hon. Abdul Ningi).

Adjourned accordingly at 4.10 p.m.

Aminu Bello Masari
Speaker