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**Thursday  
2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2009**

**FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

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# **NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

## **FOURTH REPUBLIC**

### **THIRD ASSEMBLY (SIXTH SENATE)**

### **SECOND SESSION**

## **THE SENATE OFFICIAL REPORT**

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**SENATE OF THE FEDERAL  
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

*Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2009*

*The Senate met at 10.40 a.m.*

**PRAYERS**

(The President in the Chair)

**VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS**

**The President:** Distinguished Senators, we have the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009 before us for approval. We have pages 643, 644, 645, and 645.

**Senator Nimi Barigha-Amange** (Bayelsa West): Mr. President, I rise to move that the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009 be approved.

**Senator Patrick Enebeli Osakwe** (Delta North): Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion ably moved by my brother from the South- South Zone, Senator Barigha-Amange.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:* That the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2009 be approved.

**MESSAGES FROM MR. PRESIDENT**

**Confirmation of Nominations**

**The President:** I have some letters from Mr. President. The first one reads thus:

*Senator David Mark, GCON 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2009  
President of the Senate,  
National Assembly Complex,  
Three Arms Zone,  
Abuja.*

*Dear Brother,*

**CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENT OF A  
MEMBER OF THE POLICE SERVICE  
COMMISSION**

*The Police Service Commission is one of the  
Federal Executive Bodies established under Section*

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*153(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. By the provision of Part 1(m) of the Third Schedule of the 1999 Constitution, the Commission shall comprise a Chairman and such number of other persons not less than seven (7) but not more than nine (9) as may be prescribed by an Act of the National Assembly.*

*Section 2(1) of the Commission's enabling Act also provides that the Commission shall comprise:*

- (i) a Chairman who shall be the Chief Executive of the Commission;*
- (ii) a retired Justice of the Supreme Court or Court of Appeal;*
- (iii) a retired Police Officer not below the rank of Commissioner of Police;*
- (iv) one representative from each of the following:*
  - (a) Women interest;*
  - (b) The Nigerian Press;*
  - (c) Non-governmental Human Rights Organisation in Nigeria*
  - (d) Organised Private Sector (Part-time Members) and*
- (v) the Secretary of the Commission.*

*In this connection, there is a vacant position in the membership of the Commission following the death of Hon. Justice A. O. Ejiwunmi, a full-time member of the Police Service Commission. I have, therefore, in the exercise of the powers conferred on me by Section 154(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, decided to appoint Hon. Justice S. A. Akintan, a retired Justice of Supreme Court as a suitable replacement.*

*In line with the provision of Section 154(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which states that the appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate, I hereby present Hon. Justice S. A. Akintan whose Curriculum Vitae (CV) is attached herewith for the Senate kind consideration and confirmation, please.*

*Yours sincerely,*

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(Signed)  
**Umaru Musa Yar'Adua**  
**President**

The second letter reads thus:

Senator David Mark, GCON      24<sup>th</sup> March, 2009  
President of the Senate,  
Senate Chambers,  
National Assembly Complex,  
Abuja.

Dear Brother,

**REQUEST FOR CONFIRMATION OF**  
**APPOINTMENT OF TARABA STATE**  
**REPRESENTATIVE IN THE REVENUE**  
**MOBILISATION, ALLOCATION AND**  
**FISCAL COMMISSION**

The Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission is one of the Federal Executive Bodies established under Section 153(1) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. By the provision of the 1(N) of the Third Schedule of the Constitution, the Commission shall comprise a Chairman and one Member from each state of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. In this connection, the tenure of the Taraba State representative in the Commission has expired.

I have, therefore, in the exercise of the powers confirmed on me by Sections 154(1) and 156(3) of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria decided to reappoint Mr. Useni Gangum whose Curriculum Vitae is attached herewith as a Member of the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission representing Taraba State for another term of five (5) years.

In accordance with the provision of Section 154(1) of the 1999 which states that the appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the Senate, I hereby present Mr. Useni Gangum, for the kind consideration and confirmation by the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed):  
**Umaru Musa Yar'Adua**  
**President**

The third letter reads:

Senator David Mark, GCON      19<sup>th</sup> March, 2009  
President of the Senate,  
National Assembly Complex,  
Three Arms Zone  
Abuja.

Dear Brother,

**CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENT OF A**  
**MEMBER OF THE INDEPENDENT CORRUPT**  
**PRACTICES AND OTHER RELATED**  
**OFFENCES COMMISSION (ICPC)**

Section 3(3) of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act, 2000 provides that the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission shall consist of a Chairman and twelve (12) other members, two of whom shall come from each of the six geo-political zones. In this connection, there is a vacancy in the composition of the Commission.

I have, therefore, in the exercise of the powers conferred on me by Section 3(6) of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act, 2000, decided to appoint Mr. Bako Abdullahi as a member of the Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission.

In line with the provision of Section 3(6) of the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act, which states that the appointment shall be subject to the confirmation by the Senate, I hereby forward the nomination of Mr. Bako Abdullahi whose Curriculum Vitae is attached herewith for the Senate's kind consideration and confirmation, please.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed):  
**Umaru Musa Yar'Adua**  
**President**

This is a letter from the Ad-Hoc Committee on the Review of the Remuneration Package of Political and Public Office Holders in Nigeria.

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*President of the Senate,  
Your Excellency,*

Sir,

*The meeting of the Special Team on the Review of Remuneration Package of Political Office Holders will hold on Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, at 2.00 p.m. in Meeting Room 3.04, Senate New Building.*

(Signed)

**Distinguished Senator Joy Ifeyinwa Emodi,  
Chairman**

**Visit of Members of the National Association of  
Political Science Students, University of Abuja  
And Students of the Department of  
Architecture, University of Jos, Plateau State**

I wish to acknowledge the presence of members of the National Association of Political Science Students, University of Abuja and Students of the Department of Architecture, University of Jos, Plateau State.

They are in the Gallery to observe Senate proceedings. We wish them fruitful observation of our proceedings. *(The Visitors stood for recognition)*

Thank you very much. Sit down, please.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS**

**Report of the Committee on National Identity  
Card and National Population Commission on  
the Screening of Nominees**

**Senator Teslim Kolawole Folarin** (Oyo Central): Mr. President, the first Order of the Day is the presentation and consideration of the Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as members of the National Population Commission.

You will recall that the Report of the Committee was laid on Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> March, 2009 in this very hallowed Chamber. You may now

invite the Chairman of the Committee, Senator Hosea O. Ehinlanwo, to move the Motion for the presentation and consideration of the Report.

**Senator Hosea O. Ehinlanwo** (Ondo South): Mr. President, I rise to move that this Senate do consider the Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as members in the National Population Commission and approve the recommendations contained therein.

**Senator Dahiru A. Kuta** (Niger East): Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion that the Senate do consider the Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as members in the National Population Commission and approve the recommendations contained therein.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:* That the Senate do consider the Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as members in the National Population Commission and approve the recommendations contained therein.

**Senator Hosea O. Ehinlanwo:** Mr. President, I hereby present the Report of the Senate Committee on the National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of two nominees as Commissioners in the National Population Commission held at the Committee Room 3.05, Senate New Building, National Assembly Complex on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2009.

**Membership**

The membership of the Committee is as follows:

1. Senator H. O. Ehinlanwo Chairman
2. Senator Satty D. Gogwim Vice Chairman
3. Senator Kake Mallam Yale Member

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|---------------------------------|--------|
| 4. Senator Odion Ugbesia        | Member |
| 5. Senator Anthony O. Agbo      | Member |
| 6. Senator Adefemi Kila         | Member |
| 7. Senator I. S. Turaki         | Member |
| 8. Senator Ahmed M. Makarfi     | Member |
| 9. Senator Ikechukwu J. Obiorah | Member |
| 10. Dahiru A. Kuta              | Member |

The Senate at its Plenary Session on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2009 considered the request of Mr. President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the confirmation of the appointment of two nominees as Commissioners in the National Population Commission (NPC) namely:

1. Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed Kebbi State
2. Yusuf Mohammed Anka Zamfara State

The Senate, after careful deliberations agreed that the request of Mr. President be referred to the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission with a mandate to further screen the nominees and report back to the Senate.

#### Methodology

The Committee met and discussed on the modalities for the screening exercise. The Committee requested for relevant documents from Security Agencies including the Police, the State Security Service and the Code of Conduct Bureau on Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2009. The nominees appeared before the Committee for the exercise in a sitting that witnessed the greatest attendance by the distinguished Members of the Committee. The Curriculum Vitae and other supporting documents of each nominee were examined and the Committee came up with the following findings:

#### Findings

##### 1. Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed

Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed was a nominee from the President to represent Kebbi State in the National Population Commission. He was born in July 1947 in Yelwa, Yauri Local Government Area of Kebbi State and commenced

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his primary education at Yauri and Birnin-Kebbi in 1953. He obtained his GCE 'O' Level Certificate from Malvern College, England in 1965, Higher School Certificate in English Literature, History and General Papers from Government Secondary School, Kano in 1967 and an Administrative - *(Interruptions)*

**The President:** Distinguished Senator, we can read those ones. You just give us a summary of your Report. If you go to your observations and what you have recommended, it would be better rather than reading through their Curriculum Vitae again.

**Senator Hosea O. Ehinlanwo:** I will go to age 8 where we have observations.

#### Observations

The Senate Committee on National I.D Card and National Population observed as follows:

- i. That the appointments are in compliance with Section 14 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 on the need to reflect the Federal Character principle.
- ii. The remaining 34 States of the Federation including FCT are fully represented in the National Population Commission.
- iii. The Committee was also satisfied that the nominees have been cleared by the relevant security agencies namely the Police, the State Security Service and the Code of Conduct Bureau.

#### Recommendation

The Members of the Committee, having been satisfied with the qualification, competence, experience, suitability and character of the nominees hereby recommends that the Senate do confirm the appointments of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed and Alhaji Yusuf Mohammed Anka as Commissioners in the National Population Commission.

**Senator Abubakar Danso Sodangi** (Nasarawa West): Mr. President, I rise to commend the Report ably presented by Senator Hosea O. Ehinlanwo in respect of the screening exercise conducted on the two nominees.

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I had a rare privilege of staying in Sokoto University and by my association with quite a number of Sokoto and Zamfara citizens to know the two gentlemen. As reported in this exercise, these nominees are very competent, capable and can be entrusted with this very assignment.

I urge my Colleagues to give expeditious approval to this nomination and that this people will not let us down. I so support.

**Senator Teslim Kolawole Folarin:** Mr. President, I move that this Senate do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as Members in the National Population Commission.

**Senator Maina Ma'aji Lawan** (Borno North): Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion that the Senate do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Alhaji Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as members in the National Population Commission and approve the recommendations contained therein.

**The President:** Distinguished Senator Hosea Ehinlanwo, can you lay your Report, please?

*(Report accordingly laid on the Table)*

*Question put and agreed to.*

The Report of the Committee on National Identity Card and National Population Commission on the Screening of Alhaji Abdullahi Abarshi Muhammed (Kebbi State) and Yusuf Mohammed Anka (Zamfara State) as Members in the National Population Commission – CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF WHOLE

**The Chairman:** In the absence of any comment, I will put the Question that the Senate do approve the nomination of Alhaji Abdullahi Mohammed (Kebbi State) as a member in the National Population Commission

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*Question put and agreed to.*

Will the Senate approve the nomination of Alhaji Yusuf Anka (Zamfara State) as a member in the National Population Commission?

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** Mr. Chairman, I now move that you report progress.

**Senator Maina Ma'aji Lawan:** I second the Motion that the Chairman do report progress.

*Question put and agreed to.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

**The President:** The Senate in the Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the Committee on the National Identity Card and National Population on the screening of Mr. President's nominees for appointment as Commissioners in the National Population Commission and approved the following nominations:

- (i) Alhaji Abdullahi Mohammed (Kebbi State) and;
- (ii) Alhaji Yusuf Muhammed Anka (Zamfara State).

Is this a true reflection of what transpired in the Committee of the Whole?

**Several distinguished Senators:** Yes.

#### **Confirmation of Nominees**

**The President:** Will the Senate confirm the appointment of Alhaji Abdullahi Mohammed as a member in the National Population Commission

*Question put and agreed to.*

Will the Senate confirm the appointment of Alhaji Yusuf Mohammed Anka as a member in the National Population Commission?

*Question put and agreed to.*

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*Resolved:* That the Senate do confirm the appointments of Alhaji Abdullahi Mohammed and Alhaji Yusuf Mohammed Anka as members in the National Population Commission.

We wish all of them the best of luck and very successful tenure.

**Report of the Committee on Ethics, Code of Conduct and Public Petitions**

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** Mr. President, if you take a look at the second Order of the Day it has two Reports; we will take only one today.

The second Order of the Day is the Consideration of the Report of the Committee on Ethics, Code of Conduct and Public Petitions on the premature retirement of Mrs. Faith E. E. Umoh.

**Some distinguished Senators:** Senator Hambagda is not here now.

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** May I respectfully step down this Report?

**The President:** But, distinguished Omar Hambagda was here?

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** May I respectfully request that these items on the Order Paper on the arrest and torture to death of Friday Uvianene and the premature retirement of Mrs. Faith E. E. Umoh be stood down till another Legislative day.

I so move.

**Senator Maina Ma'aji Lawan:** I second the Motion that the two items on our Order Paper be stood down till the next legislative day.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:* That the two items on the Order Paper on the arrest and torture to death of Friday Uvianene and the premature retirement of Mrs. Faith E. E. Umoh be stood down till to another legislative day.

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**CONSIDERATION OF BILLS**

**River Basins Development Authorities Act (Amendment) Bill, 2009**

A Bill for an Act to Amend the Provisions of the River Basins Development Authorities Act, CAP R9 Bill 2009 (SB. 134)

*Order for Second Reading.*

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** Mr. President, the third Order of the Day is the second Reading of the River Basins Development Authorities, Act, (Amendment) Bill, 2009.

This Bill, was read the First Time in this Chamber on Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2008. You may wish to invite the Deputy Senate President, Senator Ike Ekweremadu, to move the Motion for the Bill to be read the Second Time.

**Senator Ike Ekweremadu** (Enugu West): Mr. President, I hereby seek the leave of this very distinguished Senate to lead the debate for the Second Reading for a Bill for an Act to Amend the Provisions of the River Basins Development Authorities Act, Cap R9 Laws of the Federation.

I so move.

**The President:** You do not need to move a Motion rather you would just start off with the lead debate

**Senator Ike Ekweremadu:** Mr. President, I am pleased at this privilege of leading the debate on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Provisions of the River Basins Development Authorities Act, Cap R9. The Bill is also referred to by its Short Title as River Basins Development Authority (Establishment, etc) (Amendment) Bill 2008.

The Bill has been read by the distinguished Senate for the First Time.

Mr. President and Distinguished Colleagues are already aware that the River Basins Development Authorities are established to among others things carry out the following functions:

- a. Undertake comprehensive development of both surface and underground water resources for multipurpose use with particular emphasis on

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the provision of irrigation infrastructure and the control of floods and erosion and for watershed management;

- b. Construct, operate and maintain dams, dykes, wells, boreholes, irrigation and drainage systems and handover all lands to be cultivated under the irrigation schemes to the farmers;
- c. Supply water from the Authority's storage Schemes to all users for a fee;
- d. Construct, operate and maintain roads and bridges linking project and sites,
- e. Develop and keep up-to-date and comprehensive water resources master plan as well as water resources, water use, socio-economic and environmental data of the River Basin concerned.

We have at present 12 River Basin Development Authorities for the six geopolitical zones of the country and the distribution of the 12 authorities leave the South East Zone with only one, the Anambra/Imo River Basin Development Authority.

It is now certain that one river Basin Development Authority is grossly inadequate to cater for the five States of South East. The Bill seeks, therefore, with the leave of this Senate and the support of our Colleagues, to create an additional River Basin Development Authority to cater for some States of South East.

Specifically, the Bill seeks to divide the existing Anambra/Imo River Basin Development Authority into two, namely, Imo River Basin Development Authority to cater for Imo and Abia States and Anambra River Basin Development Authority to cater for Anambra, Enugu and Ebonyi States.

The Bill further seeks to change the nomenclature of the Chief Executive of the River Basins Development Authorities from General Manager to Managing Director. This is because at present what they answer is Managing Director but what we have in the law is General Manager. We intend to formalise it with this Bill.

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It further seeks to realign the jurisdiction of the various River Basins Development Authorities along geopolitical zones for ease of reference and administration. Presently, we have some River Basin Authorities dealing with some States that are outside particular geo-political zones and they have a State like Edo which is part of another River Basin Development Authority, in the South West instead of being in the South-South.

There is no gainsaying that the Amendment this Bill seeks will entail obvious financial implications for the Federal Government in setting up of administrative structure as well as personnel cost. This is estimated at N50 million per annum as it is expected that the host State Government will provide initial accommodation to the new Authority created.

N50 million, however, pales into insignificance when compared with the benefits that will accrue to the areas under the jurisdiction of the new Authority in such sectors as agricultural extension, provision of dams for irrigation and power generation, rural feeder roads development, etc.

May I, therefore, in view of the laudable objectives of this Bill invite you all to support its passage.

**Senator Kabiru Gaya (Kano South):** Mr. President, I accept the Amendment on the Bill as proposed by the Deputy Senate President and I believe it is a welcome proposal. One of the Seven Points Agenda of Mr. President is agriculture and I believe in order to enhance that point of the Agenda the River Basin should be, at least, two in each zone. I believe that the Amendment is a good one.

There should be additional priority on these River Basins for the governments utilising them. I can give you example of Kano or Hadejia-Jamare River Basin. This project was started by the former Governor of Kano State, late Alhaji Audu Bako. He built Tiga Dam which is the second largest earth dam in Nigeria. The concept of irrigation was started by the then military administration and in the four years of his administration he was able to plan about 10,000 hectares for irrigation and Kano was becoming the food basket of Nigeria. After four years of that administration the Federal

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Government took over the project. Within four years of his administration he did 10,000 hectares.

Federal Government took over the project 23 years ago and they were able to do only a little above 3,000 hectares. That means that they took over the project without funding it. If we are really want to develop agriculture, I believe it should be a priority. You cannot take a project from a State Government and kill it. If Kano State had continued with the project by now it could have had over 100,000 hectares of irrigation and with 100,000 hectares under cultivation we should be able to provide enough food for Nigerians.

There is a State in India called Punjab which is not as big as Kano State but it is producing 60 to 70 *per cent* of wheat requirement of India from irrigation farming with boreholes not even dams. But in our State we have dams through which water can flow from Kano up to Chad without using any pump. I believe that it is not only creating additional River Basins but government must fund them. If we develop agriculture, I assure you that we will eliminate poverty and give jobs to Nigerians.

So, I believe this is a very important Bill and I support the Deputy Senate President on this aspect but I also support that there should be more funding to agricultural sector being one of the Seven Points Agenda.

**Senator Ahmad Rufa'i Sani** (Zamfara West): Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill for very obvious reasons. Firstly, today we are witnessing what is popularly called economic meltdown worldwide and Nigeria is greatly affected because of our mono-cultural nature of the economy dependent on oil. The only way we can diversify would be by giving more attention to agriculture. It should not be rain-fed agriculture; we need to encourage irrigation so that our people can produce food all year round.

The River Basin Development Authorities as we have them today are doing very well. What they need is reinvigoration by additional financing to increase their efficiency and productivity. Therefore, additional River Basin Authority in the South East will not only be meant for the South East Zone but putting additional hectares of land under cultivation will increase the food availability

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in this country and Nigeria therefore will be able to produce enough food to feed the nation.

I will, therefore, support not to only dividing the Anambra/Imo River Basins Development Authority into two but also making vigorous effort to increase the hectarage and coverage of all the River Basins in Nigeria so that we can bring more land under cultivation using irrigation scheme.

**Senator Victor Ndoma-Egba** (Cross River Central): Mr. President, I rise to support this timely Bill moved by my brother and very worthy in-law, the Deputy Senate President.

The primary duty of a State is to ensure that its citizens are well fed and in that effort nothing will be too much or too little. Also, I believe that in this era of global financial meltdown we must begin to look at other alternatives and for us as a country, the most immediate alternative is agriculture. This Bill provides us with yet another opportunity to take a second look at the alternatives available to us as a nation especially at this point in time. It is for that reason that I support this Bill.

It will also ensure parity and equity in the distribution of River Basin Authorities in the zones. It only makes sense that if every other zone has two River Basin Authorities, the South-East Zone deserves nothing less.

Furthermore, creating an additional River Basin Authority would also ensure that the functions of the River Basin Authority are further boost so that it can be of greater use to the greater number.

The other benefit of this Bill is to harmonise the structure. Today, we have some River Basin Authorities where the Chief Executives are designated Managing Directors and others like the one in my State, the Cross River Basin Development Authority the Chief Executive is still referred to as General Manager. The intention of this Bill is to harmonise the structures so that we have one structure for all River Basin Authorities in the country. It is for this and other reasons in this Bill sponsored by the Deputy Senate President that I support it.

**Senator Smart Adeyemi** (Kogi West-Central): Mr. President, I rise to support this Bill and to say

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without mincing words that for justice, fairness and equity, the South-East deserves to have one additional River Basin Authority. I must equally add that with due respect to the Deputy Senate President, I wonder why they kept quiet for this long to raise this particular issue. It is a serious matter in a nation like ours where a complete zone is not given its fair share of national projects and services.

At times I ask myself what is the problem with our nation and our leaders? I was discussing some few seconds ago with my Colleagues here that some weeks back we were discussing *Keke Napep* and poverty in Nigeria and it was made known to us that about N2.5 billion was paid for tricycle called *Keke Napep*. We do not need to wait until we are told that our economy is bad.

Before the so-called world economy meltdown, as Nigerians we all know that there was already a large army of unemployed people in this country. We should diversify the nation's economy and let us face agricultural sector so that we can provide job opportunities and expand the economy.

Today, only few Governors have given emphasis to agriculture. The one that readily come to my mind is the white farmers from Zimbabwe that were attracted by the Government of Kwara State to invest in agriculture in the State. I was at the site of where these white farmers are working in Kwara State and I was amazed that this is happening in Nigeria. Apart from the farm of retired Air Vice Marshal Muritala Nyako which I saw in Yola, I did not know of any serious farm that can provide job opportunities for thousands of people until I saw the Zimbabwean farmers' farm.

We must emphasise agriculture. Our governments must take the development of agriculture with all the seriousness that it deserves. There has been a lot of misplacement of priorities in government policies and projects in this country. We must come to the realisation that it is good that we are blessed with oil but we must take agriculture with all the seriousness it deserves. It is not just having additional River Basin Authority that is the issue. We must equally look at the existing ones and how much have they impacted on the lives of the States or communities where they operate?

Some of the River Basin Authorities are just there by name. Every year allocations are given to

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them up to the tune of about N4 billion but you cannot see in concrete terms the effect of the investments. It is because of lukewarm attitude and misplacement of priorities as to what is our mission; the set goals of government. We have in this country about 95 Universities recognised by the National Universities Commission, in addition to over 100 Polytechnics and Monotechnics in Nigeria. Every year we have a minimum of 500,000 fresh graduates. The implication of this is that less than 10 *per cent* of them will be gainfully employed. We, as legislators, must emphasise the implications of this to the Executive. It would be in our interest to do so that we can sleep with our two eyes closed at night.

We must ensure that agriculture is developed to the point that it will be attractive to young graduates to seek employment. If we are determined to develop agriculture and make it attractive, it is not a difficult thing because we are endowed in this country. We have all that it takes to develop agriculture. Today, our nation is at a cross road as to how to solve the problem of unemployment. For you and me to be able to sleep well at night, we must emphasise to the Executive that we must develop agriculture and diversify our economy. Apart from the foreign earnings, we must ensure that it is attractive enough for young graduates to see agricultural sector as a place where they can develop their future and make their daily living.

**Senator Saminu Turaki** (Jigawa North-West): Mr. President, in supporting this Bill, I will like to share my experience as a Governor. In my first two weeks in office, part of the State was flooded because of the outflow from the Hadejia Jamare River Basin Authority. In 1976 Alhaji Audu Bako's Government left 23 earth dams in Kano and Jigawa States. From the Reports, one million hectares of land was supposed to be put under cultivation for rice and tomato so that we will not import. Today, 33 years after, we are still not there as Senator Kabiru Gaya had explained.

In supporting this Bill, I had wanted us to agree that not only adding another River Basin Authority in the South-East but to take a decision that in the next five years three million hectares should be under cultivation so that each State will have a minimum of 10,000 hectares. Yes, we can create River Basin Authorities but they will become like

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the ministries where every year you give them small amount of money which does not help them.

The Committee to which this Bill will be referred should decide what should be done even if it means raising national bond for five to ten years. We can even raise ₦1 trillion national bond and then decide that within ten years we want a minimum of three million hectares to be cultivated by three River Basin Authorities and each State should have a minimum of 10,000 hectares. If we have that the Bill will make more sense. If not in the next 40 years we are going to come back again on this.

Therefore, we should take action on this now. If we agree with the Executive and pass the Bill it will be implemented. What is important is that there should be a time limit attached to this so that the nation can move forward.

Today, agriculture accounts for 44 per cent of our GDP which is twice what oil is bringing to the GDP. When we met as a Committee, I remember we were talking of US\$7 billion investment in oil. So, it is not out of place if we say every year we are setting aside a large amount of our budget for agriculture. What we do now is too small. As I said, a bond should be attached to this.

**Senator Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi** (Kaduna North): Mr. President, Senator Kabiru Gaya started this as a former Governor. Anything to be done to develop agriculture will always have my support and I am sure the support of all distinguished Senators. I will hinge my support for the creation of additional River Basin Development Authority not from the point of view of parity of number amongst the geo-political zones because River Basins are supposed to cover landmass and there is the issue of technical feasibility. If you go to a particular basin to split it, you will be confronted with the problem of what bodies of water would they control? The entire body of water may be in one area. Then what is the other Authority going to do? So, we should avoid complicating what we want to do. I can see that in the area of streamlining jurisdiction.

It is not possible to streamline jurisdictions on the basis of geo-political zone because rivers and basins are not distributed on that basis. It is a natural issue. Therefore, whatever is practicable should be allowed to prevail so that the good

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intentions that the sponsor of the Bill has will not go further to create complications.

I urge the Committee to which this Bill will be committed to take a lot of technical input so as to guide it in bringing a Bill which may not just create one additional River Basin Authority but could create other additional ones if found to be feasible and will add to efficiency. At the same time, we need not restrict River Basin Authority to geo-political zones.

For example, there is no way you can put Kaduna under Hadejia Jamare or Rima Basin Authority. You can only put it under Upper Niger River Basin Authority. So, you can say Upper Niger is for Minna, Kaduna and some other States which are in different geo-political zones. Except if you are going to create Kaduna River Basin Development Authority. But we should try to avoid that kind of complication.

**The President:** Kaduna State by the proposal is in Upper Niger River Basin Authority. That is what he is recommending.

**Senator Ahmed M. Makarfi:** Yes, Mr. President.

**The President:** It is all right. Your argument is that we should not say it is geo-political zones.

**Senator Ahmed M. Makarfi:** Yes.

**The President:** In accordance with Order 55 of our Standing Orders, I will give the Floor to Senators who are against the Bill.

**Senator Nimi Barigha-Amange** (Bayelsa East): Mr. President, Order 55(2) of our Standing Orders says after you must have finished with those Senators who are in support, you can call for those against.

**The President:** It is all right. If you are in support, I will call you next. At the moment, I am calling a class of Senators. Distinguished Senator George Akume, you have the Floor.

**Senator George Akume** (Benue North West): Mr. President, I do not know why you are calling me. Do you want me to speak for or against?

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**The President:** I want you to speak in line with your Colleagues, the former Governors.

**Senator George Akume;** Mr. President, I rise to make a few comments. Substantially, I am in support of the Bill before us. I am happy to speak on this occasion because I come from a State that produces food. Sixty *per cent* of the food requirements of this country come from Benue State. *(Laughter)*

**The President:** He is right.

**Senator George Akume:** If you doubt it; give me a few days we will block all the access roads into Benue and there will be starvation. Of course, you will not force us to do that.

On a very serious note, I believe the most critical thing here is how best we can advance the cause of agriculture in this country using the River Basin Development Authorities. It is not really the number that matters but the basic thing here is funding. We have a large landmass in this country which can support agriculture for a long time but because of inadequacy of rainfall may not support agriculture all the year round but through the River Basin Development Authorities we should be able to crop plants in this country throughout the year. This is why the issue of dams and irrigation is so critical to agriculture in Nigeria.

Ninety-nine *per cent* of Israel is desert yet Israel is able to feed her population and export food. She does this through irrigation. Nigeria can do the same thing if we commit enough resources into the River Basin Development Authorities. For example, we have been talking of inferno and we are laying emphasis in this world today on bio-fuels we are no more emphasising fossil fuels. Since we have the land and the human beings who, if supported, can transform agriculture in this country, we are calling for massive injection of funds in agriculture through these River Basin Authorities.

In the advanced parts of the world we know that agriculture is substantially subsidised by the governments. Today in our country, a bag of fertiliser goes to as much as ₦3,000 and this unaffordable by most people. But if we have co-ordinated plan that uses the River Basins, we should be able to not only open up more land for cultivation, provide more tractors to work on the farms but also get critical inputs for our people.

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Above that, we would be providing employment for the teaming youths of this country who roam the streets and steal because they have no other thing to do. Even if we have 20 River Basin Development Authorities, if they are not properly funded they would not make any impact. If they are two but well funded, the impact will be there. My basic support is that there should be proper funding of the River Basin Development Authorities.

We can create additional one because I know how sensitive we talk about the issues of parity and fairness in this country. I support that an additional River Basin Development Authority be created. Our brothers and sisters from the South East are very good farmers. They are not just good at commerce, they are our neighbours and I know we have very good farmers from Abakaliki who have copied the techniques from Benue State. *(Laughter)*

I support this Bill in terms of proper funding and an additional River Basin Development Authority. However, I disagree on the issue of nomenclature for the Chief Executive. Let us call them General Managers. There is nothing wrong with calling them General Managers. The most important thing is what they do. Let them do the job first, then, we can promote them to the position of Managing Directors.

**Senator Nimi Barigha-Amange** (Bayelsa East): Mr. President, I want to remind us that in 1976 the then Obasanjo regime created the River Basin Development Authorities. It is as a result of the existence of the Niger Delta Development Board which was created in 1956 as a result of the Willie's Report. When the Rivers Basin Development Authorities were created all over Nigeria, surprisingly, the one created for the Niger Delta Region was reduced to Grade C while other Basin Development Authorities enjoyed Grade A and Grade B facilities.

To support the position of the Deputy President of the Senate, if River Basin Development Authorities are created, the same nomenclature should be given to them. Today, the Grade A River Basin Development Authorities, such as, Sokoto Rima, Jamare, Upper and Lower Niger have Managing Directors and Executive Directors, while those in the South-South are in Grade C and have General Managers and Assistant-General Managers. If you talk of food, nobody can claim that he or she can eat food without fish. *(Laughter)*

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So, the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority is as important as the Sokoto Rima Basin Development Authority. Let us give them the same nomenclature and let them operate at the same pedestal.

If you look at the provision of the Act as quoted by the Deputy Senate President it says: (b) *Construct, operate and maintain dams, dykes, wells, boreholes, irrigation and drainage system and hand over all lands to be cultivated under irrigation scheme to the farmers.*

If you look at (a) it stated *inter alia*; control of floods and erosion. The coastal communities are being wiped out by flood and erosion. Therefore, the Niger Delta Basin Development Authority is as important as the Sokoto Rima and they should answer the same name. If they have Managing Director, they all should have Managing Director and if they have Executive Director, they all should have Executive Director. Funding should be made equal to them. The idea of given the entire South-South Basin Development Authority Grade C categorisation is not acceptable to us.

**Senator Ahmad Ibrahim Lawan** (Yobe North): Mr. President, the Amendment sought here, to me, is a very clear demonstration of the fact that the river basin systems have failed in Nigeria. If they have been functional, there would not be any need for this Amendment. They would have covered every part of Nigeria properly. There is hardly any of the River Basin Development Authorities today in Nigeria that performs the functions enumerated from (a) to (e).

I am from the North East and the part of North East I come from belongs to the Chad Basin Development Authority. In the 1970s and early 1980s the Chad Basin Development Authority had a land of about 100,000 hectares for irrigation under wheat particularly. In fact, that River Basin Development Authority could even generate electricity. Today as we speak, the Maiduguri Flour Mill which was established to be supported by the raw materials from the cultivation of wheat through irrigation in New Marte and Chad Basin imports wheat because the Chad Basin Development Authority does not function.

We need to add more than one River Basins but that is not the point. The point is proper funding. We could fund as much as we can but the

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private sector is also supposed to take part in this. While I support this, I want to say that we need to ensure proper funding and proper functioning of the River Basins across the country.

Denmark has five *per cent* of her population doing agriculture and agriculture accounts for 20 *per cent* that country's GDP. That shows that there is need for efficiency and effectiveness in the way in which we carry agricultural activities in the country.

Water Resources across the country need to be properly utilised. Some of us are disadvantaged to be downstream of most of the rivers and we have the difficulty of getting water. One of our Colleagues in his submission indicated that water runs from Kano to Lake Chad but that was a long time ago. In the 1970s, water would run from River Hadejia through Yobe into Lake Chad. Today there is no water from River Hadejia into River Yobe, not to talk of running into Lake Chad.

In fact, Nigeria spent millions of Dollars in feasibility studies to get water from the Central African Republic, River Congo into Lake Chad. This is because we have not been able to harness our water resources properly.

I support the additional River Basin Development Authority, but as Senator Ahmed Makarfi said, these River Basins are not defined by geopolitical zones but by hydrological formations. Therefore, which ever Committee that will consider the details of the Amendments sought by this Bill, the demarcations must be based on hydrological and technical facts so that the River Basins would be more efficient and serve the purpose for which they were created.

With this, I want to urge every one of us not only to support the creation of an additional River Basin Development Authority, but also to be prepared to give more funding and ensure, through our oversight functions that the funds are properly utilised.

**The President:** For clarity, because Senator Barigha-Amange was talking of Grades A, B and C and that some have General Managers while others have Managing Directors, the Act has not graded the River Basins at all. I do not know where he got that information. We must correct that because it is not correct.

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Section 6 of the Act says: *For each Authority, there shall be a General Manager who shall be the Chief Executive and who shall be appointed by the President.*

Section 1 says: *There are hereby established 11 Authorities to be known by the names specified in Column 1 of the First Schedule to this Act which shall have powers and exercise such functions as are specified in this Act.*

There is really nothing to show that the establishment categorised the Authorities into Grade A, B or C. Like every other allocation of fund in this country, I do not think it will be possible to say that every River Basin should get equal amount of fund. But just to clarify your record.

Has anybody really got anything more that has not been said that he would like to add?

**Senator Dahiru A. Kuta** (Niger East): Mr. President, I support the Amendments, particularly, as you know that Niger State is the Food Basket of the nation. We have done everything possible to ensure that our River Basins survive. Unfortunately, our River Basins today are like motherless children. Most of the functions of the Water Resources have been transferred to the River Basin Development Authorities without enough funds. They get about N2 to N3 billion and what we get as a result are abandoned projects.

We have the Kagara Dam in Niger State that is about 30 years old and the total allocation to the Upper Niger River Basin was not more than N3 billion and that project requires more than \$4 billion to complete. Actually, the lack of fund has led to the abandonment of some of the projects that we are talking about.

What is very important and I hope the Bill will look into it, is that since the split of the Niger River Basin Development Authority into Upper and Lower River Basin Development Authorities in Minna and Ilorin in Kwara State, there has not been any law establishing the two separate River Basin Development Authorities. Actually, they have been operating illegally because there is no law establishing any of the two separate bodies. I hope when the Committee comes to look at this, they would consider exactly what is happening to Upper

Niger and Lower Niger River Basin Development Authorities.

**The President:** I think we have taken enough. The point he has made is important because in the original Bill there is no Upper Niger. There is Upper Benue, Lower Benue, but there is no Upper Niger actually. So, that is an illegal operation that has been going on. When the Bill goes back to the Committee, it should consider both the original and the Amendment Bills so that the matter he has raised could be included.

I will now put the Question on the Second Reading of this Bill.

*Question put and agreed to.*

If you take a look at the Deputy Senate President's presentation it has both agriculture and water resources components, so the Bill is referred to the two Committees on Water Resources and Agriculture.

**Senator Bassey Ewa-Henshaw:** Water Resources Committee has oversight responsibilities for all the River Basin Development Authorities. There is no dispute about that.

**The President:** If the Water Resources Committee is the supervising Committee then there is no question of Agricultural Committee to have a hand in it. Therefore, the Bill is referred to the Committee on Water Resources to report back within three weeks.

*Bill read the Second Time and referred to the Committee on Water Resources to report back in three weeks.*

#### **Chartered Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Nigeria**

A Bill for an Act to Establish the Chartered Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Nigeria and for Matters Connected Therewith, 2009

*Order for Second Reading*

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** Mr. President, the fourth Order of the Day is the Second Reading of the Chartered Institute of Cost and Management Accountants Bill, 2009. You will recall that this is a

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House Bill which was read the First Time in this Chamber on Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2009.

Since this is a House Bill, I want to move that we refer this Bill to the relevant Committee for further legislative action.

**The President:** It is basically for concurrence, is it not? I do not think there is need for a debate on its Second Reading by our Rules.

**Senator Omar A. Hambagda:** Mr. President, you will recall a few weeks ago, there was a Bill which was read the Second Time and referred to the Committee on Civil Service Matters on Institute of Management Accountants. This Bill and that on Institute of Management Accountants are one and the same thing. This name Chartered Institute of Cost and Management Accountants was used up to 1967 and I said so in my presentation. Developments led to the renaming of the Institute as Institute of Management Accountants in 1987 and that is the current name that is being used. Both derived from the British Institute of Management Accountants.

So, I would like to crave the indulgence of the Senate that this Bill be referred for harmonisation with the other one that is already being worked on so that there is only one Institute. This is because we cannot create these two Institutes since they are one and the same thing. That is the clarification I want to make.

**The President:** That Bill was referred to which Committee?

**Senator Omar Hambagda:** It was referred to the Senate Committee on Establishment.

**The President:** Is this going to the Committee on Establishment also?

**Senator Omar Hambagda:** Yes, Sir.

**The President:** Senator Ahmed, you do the harmonisation since both are dealing with the same subject matter. That also emphasises the point I have made that there is no need for Second Reading because what we did on the other one covers this. I will go ahead to put the Question on the Second Reading of the Bill.

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*Question put and agreed to.*

The Bill is referred to the Committee on Establishment and Public Service Matters to report back in three weeks.

*Bill Read the Second Time and referred to Senate Committee on Establishment and Public Service Matters, to report back in three weeks.*

#### **Liquefied Petroleum Gas Council of Nigeria (Establishment, etc) Bill, 2009 (SB.99)**

**Senator Teslim K. Folarin:** Mr. President, because the sponsor of the last item on the Order Paper, Senator Osita Izunaso is on an oversight function, I move that the item be stood down till another legislative day.

**The President:** Can Senator Lee Maeba or Senator Ewa-Henshaw not take it?

**Senator Lee Maeba Ledogo** (Rivers South-East): Mr. President, I have no such power.

**The President:** Really, this is not a Report. It is a Bill and by our Rules, the sponsor has to present it.

**Senator Maina Ma'aji Lawan** (Borno North): Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion moved by the Senate Leader that the last item on our Order Paper be stood down till another legislative day.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*By the leave of Senate the last item on the Order Paper stood down to another legislative day.*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Senator Teslim Folarin:** Mr. President, I move that this Senate do adjourn till Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 at 10.00 a.m. prompt.

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**Senator Maina Ma'aji Lawan:** Mr. President, I rise to second the Motion that this Senate do adjourn till Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 at 10.00 a.m. prompt.

**The President:** Before I put the Question, I know that there is a short break for Easter and I am aware that most of the Committees have slated meetings, I thank you for that and I appreciate it.

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I want to wish you a very happy short Easter break; just few days for you to go for the Easter.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Resolved:* That the Senate do stand adjourned till Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2009 at 10.00 a.m. prompt.

*The Senate adjourned accordingly at 12.18 p.m.*