

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

Wednesday, 15th June, 2016

The House met at 11.50 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: I have examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 14th June, 2016.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visitors in the Gallery

**Students of The Lord's Educational Services,
Nursery and Primary School, Tafawa Balewa
Street, Mararraba, Nasarawa State**

The Speaker: We have in the Gallery Students of The Lord's Educational Services, Nursery and Primary School, Tafawa Balewa Street, Mararraba, Nasarawa State. Could you please rise to be recognised?

Thank you for coming, kindly take your seats.

Students rose for recognition.

**Students of Government Girls' Science Secondary
School, Kuje, Abuja**

The Speaker: Also in the Gallery are Students of Government Girls' Science Secondary School, Kuje, Abuja.

Could you please rise to be recognised? Thank you for coming, kindly take your seats.

Students rose for recognition.

Students of Loyola Jesuit College, Karu, Abuja

The Speaker: Also in the Gallery are Students of Loyola Jesuit College. Could you please rise to be recognised?

Thank you for coming, kindly take your seats.

Students rose for recognition.

**Students of Our Great Bethany Excellent
Academy, Nyanya-Abuja**

The Speaker: Also in the Gallery are Students of our great Bethany Excellent Academy, Nyanya, Abuja. Could you please, rise to be recognised?

Thank you for coming, kindly take your seats.

Students rose for recognition.

**Students of King's International School, Behind
Government Secondary School, Mararaba,
Nasarawa State**

The Speaker: Last but not the least in the Gallery, are the Students of King's International School, Behind Government Secondary School, Mararaba, Nasarawa State. Could you please rise to be recognised?

Thank you for coming, kindly take your seats.

Students rose for recognition.

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC PETITIONS

The Speaker: We would take Petitions first before we dissolve into the Executive Session. Any Member who has a Petition to present to the House should rise to do so.

**Subverting the Course of Justice and Unlawfully
Dismissal**

Hon. Onyewuchi Ezenwa Francis (Owerri Municipal/North/West): Mr. Speaker, I have a Petition from my constituent; his name is Professor Chibuke Uche, a former Dean of the Faculty of Business Administration of the University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN).

Professor Uche in his Petition claims that UNN is subverting the course of justice by unlawfully dismissing him for exposing a case of academic frauds and falsification of credentials against another lecturer, Professor Mrs Uche Modum of the Department of Accountancy. He seeks the intervention of this hon. House to revert this act and also call for Public Hearing on the matter.

With your kind permission, I would go ahead and lay the Petition before the House.

The Speaker: Proceed and lay the Petition.

(Petition laid)

(Petition accordingly referred to the House Committee on Public Petitions).

PRESENTATION OF BILLS

The Speaker: The first Business of the day is presentation of 13 Bills. I now invite the Clerk to read their Short Titles.

Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, (Alteration), Bill, 2016

Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, (Alteration), Bill, 2016, (HB. 699) – presented by Hon. Yussuff Sulaimon Lasun (Irepodun/Olorunda/Osogbo/Orolu) - *read the First Time.*

Nigeria Ports Authority Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Nigeria Ports Authority Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016, (HB.569) - presented by Hon. Ossai Nicholas Ossai (Ndokwa East/Ndokwa West/Ukwuani) - *read the First Time.*

Nigeria Institute of Chartered Foresters, (Establishment), Bill, 2016

Nigeria Institute of Chartered Foresters, (Establishment), Bill, 2016, (HB. 594) - presented by Hon. Ajayi Adeyinka (Odo-Itin/Ifelodun/Boripe) - *read the First Time.*

Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999, (Alteration), Bill, 2016

Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (Alteration) Bill, 2016, (HB. 696) - presented by Hon. Adaelu Solomon Ezinwa O. (Obingwa/Osisioma/Ugunagbo), — *read the First Time.*

Free, Integrated Maternal and Child Healthcare Bill, 2016

Free, Integrated Maternal and Child Healthcare Bill, 2016 (HB. 697) - presented by Hon. Garba Ibrahim Mohammed (Gwale) — *read the First Time.*

Banks and Other Financial Institutions Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Banks and Other Financial Institutions Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (HB. 698) - presented by Hon. Garba Ibrahim Mohammed (Gwale) — *read the First Time.*

Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016, (HB. 700) - presented by the Senate — *read the First Time.*

Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme Bill, 2016

Commercial Agriculture Credit Scheme Bill, 2016, (HB. 701) - presented by the Senate — *read the First Time.*

Institute for Cancer Research and Treatment (Establishment) Bill, 2016

Institute for Cancer Research and Treatment (Establishment) Bill, 2016, (HB. 702) - presented by the Senate — *read the First Time.*

Nigeria Institute of Soil Science (Establishment) Bill, 2016

Nigeria Institute of Soil Science (Establishment) Bill, 2016, (HB. 703) - presented by the Senate — *read the First Time.*

National Fitness Day Bill, 2016

National Fitness Day Bill, 2016, (HB. 704) - presented by Hon. Diri Douye (Yenagoa/K/Opokuma) — *read the First Time.*

Civil Society Commission of Nigeria Bill, 2016

Civil Society Commission of Nigeria Bill, 2016, (HB. 705) - presented by Hon. Diri Douye (Yenagoa/K/Opokuma) — *read the First Time.*

Deep Offshore and Inland Basin Production Sharing Contracts Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016

Deep Offshore and Inland Basin Production Sharing Contracts Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016, (HB. 708) - presented by Hon. Nwokolo Victor Onyemaechi (Ika North East/Ika South) — *read the First Time.*

ANNOUNCEMENT

Happy Birthday Wishes to Rt. Hon. Mutu Nicholas

The Speaker: Today, God has added another year to the most ranking Member of this House, Rt. Hon. Mutu Nicholas. He is celebrating his Birthday today. Happy Birthday, Rt. Hon. Mutu!

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Speaker: The students that have come to watch our proceedings, it is unfortunate that we would be voting to close our proceedings for 30 minutes. If you really want to come and watch the debates, they would find a place where you can wait for maximum of 30 minutes, when we would be done. Then, we would open the Session again. Leader is invited to move that we dissolve into an Executive Session.

Hon. Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila (Surulere I): I move that this House do resolve into an Executive Session.

Hon. Jibril Umar Buba (Lokoja/Kogi (KK)): I second the Motion as moved by the Leader.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House accordingly resolved into an Executive Session.

Sitting suspended: 12.03 p.m.

Sitting resumed: 1.40 p.m.

FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice of Public Hearing

The Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, there is an announcement here on the Public Hearing on the need to investigate revenue leakages and operational inefficiency of NIMASA at Room 028 at 2:30 p.m. today, 15th June, 2016.

(Signed)
Hon. Mohammed Bago
Chairman

ORDERS OF THE DAY

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement Act (Provision) Bill, 2016

A Bill for an Act to provide for the Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Kingdom of Spain; and for Other Related Matters (HB. 444) 2016 –

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: Hon. Members, we will move on to Bills. The second Order of the day is commencement of debate on the general principles of a Bill for an Act to provide for the Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Kingdom of Spain; and for Other Related Matters (HB. 444).

Hon. Members will recall that the Bill was read for the First Time on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2016. I will now invite the Leader of the House to move that the Bill be now read the Second Time.

Hon. Jibril Umar Buba: Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill for an Act to provide for the Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Kingdom of Spain; and for Other Related Matters (HB. 444) be read a Second Time.

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma (Bende): Mr. Speaker, I second the Motion as ably moved by the Leader of the House.

The Speaker: Leader, are you prepared for the debate?

Question proposed.

Hon. Jibril Umar Buba: Yes, Mr. Speaker, before I yield the Floor to her, let me just say a few things. The fact is that the Title of the Bill speaks for itself. Naturally, there are bilateral relationships between Nigeria and most of these countries; particularly, Spain as we have mentioned in this Bill. There are also sometimes breaches of these relations.

So, this calls for a revision of these provisions and then linked to this Bill that we are about to be debated. Therefore, in line with Mr. Speaker's consideration, I will now yield the Floor to the Chairman, Foreign Affairs Committee to lead this debate.

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma: Mr. Speaker, I want to first show gratitude to the House of Representatives for finally trying to ratify this Treaty that Nigeria has entered into since the year 2004. It also leads to the commitment that Mr. Speaker had also given to the Ambassador of Sweden when he had come before you, that the House of Representatives will in the not too distant future ratify this avoidance of double taxation Treaty.

Mr. Speaker, the emergence of growth and trans-national enterprises have altered the legal and economic landscape of the world, to the extent that even Nigeria's foreign policy, which amongst other things is citizen diplomacy, is also the attraction of Foreign Direct Investment to our country. Mr. Speaker, because of that landscape and because we are living in a world increasingly without borders now, the goods and services transcend borders. It is also not strange these days to have one income that is domiciled within two jurisdictions, which means that for instance, that a company can earn a certain amount of money in a country, but two countries will lay claim to the taxation that accrues to that company.

Mr. President in his travels had gone around and he has signed into law so many Treaties and one of these Treaties is the avoidance of double taxation Treaties. The reason why it is such a desirable Treaty is that, for a country like Sweden for instance, there is a trade imbalance between Nigeria and Sweden. Nigeria's trade started at Twenty million and it roles to N800,000,000 (Eight Hundred Million United State Dollars), but Mr. Speaker, there is such a trade imbalance and it can stop the flow of income into Nigeria. This is primarily because when countries do their due diligence for coming into other countries, the first thing that they want to find out is the tax regime of that country; what are the taxation regimes of the country? How does it help the country to attract Foreign Direct Investment?

What this Bill seeks to do primarily are three things. First is to avoid double taxation so that there is flow of business into Nigeria. Secondly, it is to have full disclosure as to the amount of taxes that are accruable to both countries in such a way that there is no avoidance of tax. Thirdly, it is to formulate a mode of resolution of tax confusion; so that there is clearance as to who is paying what.

Also, let me say that Nigeria had ratified 13 avoidance of double taxation Treaties, but when you look at other countries that are Nigeria's natural allies or are Nigeria's natural competitors, like for instance, South Africa, they have entered into 60. The United Kingdom has 131 double taxation avoidance Treaties and that is the reason why Foreign Direct Investments come into those countries.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that this Treaty is very desirable to the extent that it helps us on our Foreign Direct Investment drive. Also, one thing it does is that what Parliament is doing today is very novel to the extent that it also tells the rest of the countries and the rest of the world that if Nigeria enters into Treaties with any country, that this Parliament is up to her responsibility in ratifying these Treaties in such a way that Nigeria will indeed gain from the world that is without borders.

Let me also say that this has to go to Second Reading and as Parliament we must right away do the fine tuning. The reason I say that is because we are a developing country and there are some countries that are developed with a very developed tax regime. So, this Treaty that we have entered into is in good faith, but it must be a win-win situation for Nigeria in such a way that we clearly define what type of taxes and taxable, we clearly define.

It must be a win-win situation for Nigeria in such a way that will clearly define what types of taxes are taxable. It will clearly define the amount of taxes that we are going to be taken for these counties. It will also clearly define the fact that there is the opportunity for us to pull out of this Treaty in the event that we find that it is queued against Nigerian's foreign policy objectives, which is the attraction of foreign direct investment.

I am appealing with my Colleagues that we move to the Second Reading. When we get there, I am hoping that we would definitely go via to the fine stuccoed, so that this Treaty serves best the purposes of our country in our drive to direct foreign investment.

Hon. Yakub Abiodun Akanni Balogun (Lagos Island II): Mr. Speaker, I want to lend my voice to the request by the Executive that this Bill is read for the Second Time. I want to use this opportunity to thank all the Members of the House Committee on Treaties, Protocol and Agreement for having done very good job on the Treaties that have been forwarded by the Executive to us. Also, the Treaties so far forwarded were the ones held with the Kingdom of Sweden that was deferred yesterday and the one with the Kingdom of Spain and Republic of

South Korea, the Committee had worked on the three that we have discovered that they are Treaties that we actually required.

Like Chief Dangote said, Nigerian government does not need to travel anywhere to lure any investor. By the time we create the very conducive atmosphere for investment in Nigeria, so many investors would come down to us. Also, one of such parameters with this signing of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Treaty which Nigeria has signed with these three countries about thirteen that have been signed so far, the one of Spain was actually signed on the 23rd June, 2009.

I want to agree with the Chairman of Foreign Affairs as to the importance of the Treaty. I will be talking about the structure of the Treaty itself. It consists of about thirty Articles which also cover the type of taxes to be covered by the Treaties - personal income tax, cooperate tax, income tax on none residence, capital tax and others. Who benefits? The benefit is to the investors in the two nations, but it is more to the side of the Spanish people. This is because the volume of their business in this country is more. It is when we have equal amount of enterprises with them that we can derive the greatest benefit.

But the consolation is in the fact that, the Double Taxation Treaty is to avoid the same accent of taxes being taxed in the two countries. The consolation to Nigeria is that we would have taken our taxes that are due on the profit tax, personal income tax and capital base tax. It is just for them that when they now repatriate their profit, it will not be so taxed over there, and we would have taken our deal. The Committee actually contacted the stakeholders and this is a letter from the Board of Federal Inland Revenue confirming and advising that the three Treaties so far forwarded by the Executive should be approved to the structure in which they are. I want to crave the indulgence of the Chairman to read out the portion of the letter from the tax authority in the Federal. It reads thus:

I hereby inform the Honourable Members of the House Committee on Avoidance of Double Taxation with the Republic of South Korea, Spain and others that the treaty was negotiated with the active participation of the Federal Inland Revenue Service, the agreement was negotiated using the Nigerian draft actual model which consist of the OECD and others.

In view of the forth going, it is therefore the desire of the Federal Inland Revenue to have the agreement domesticated in its present form; I further

called the attention of the Honourable Committee on treaties agreement and protocol to the President's letter on transmission of Bills for Acts to provide for the domestication and enforcement to Nigeria of the avoidance of double taxation agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and three other counties, South Korea, Spain and Sweden dated 14th March, 2016.

I wish to humbly implore the Honourable Members of the Committee to also consider the Agreement with Spain and Sweden along with that of South Korea with a view to having them domesticated in their present form.

This is the tax authority and they are advising us that they have gone through and despite the fact that many of these Treaties have been signed over six years ago. They said that in the present form they are, they are craving the indulgence of the House to consider the Treaties and approve them for domestication in the form they are.

On this note, ladies and gentlemen, I want to thank the Speaker who has been on our neck especially with regards to the South Korean Agreement and it is now seeing the light of the day. I also thank Members of the Committees having done a very thorough work on this.

I lend my voice to the domestication of the three Treaties - the Treaties with the Kingdom of Spain, Sweden and Republic of South Korea. Thank you very much, Sir.

Hon. Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila: Mr. Speaker, I want to start by saying or underlying the importance of domestication or ratification of Treaties. I have been here and this is my 4th term and 12 years now.

I am not sure I can count the numbers of Treaties that have been domesticated in this House on both hands, despite the fact that there are several International Agreements and Treaties that Nigeria has entered into. Even the much talked about Green Three Agreement, which sought to carve Bakassi out of Nigeria, has not been domesticated, and that underlines the need for us to take domestication and vocation of Treaties as imbedded in the Constitution very serious.

As it has been said by earlier speakers, this taxation agreement that are 5, 6, 7 and 8 years old and yet they are just being brought for domestication, let us talk about it. The implication of this is that if and when we have other Agreements or if we purport

to enter Agreements with other countries, all they need to do is to look at your track record and say you have not given full faith and credit to earlier Agreements. I do not see Nigeria going into an Agreement with Sweden today or with Spain or South Korea, the three countries concerned here and then jump in and receiving and/or agreeing to enter into such Agreements when the earlier ones have not been domesticated and therefore not having really the force of law in Nigeria.

What is in this agreement has been adequately covered by all the speakers, including the Chairman Treaties and Chairman Foreign Affairs Committees. It is simply to avoid double taxation. Even within Nigeria, double taxation is practical illegal. They have enumerated or explained what this Bill and the next one seeks to address, which is the situation of double taxation; it increases foreign direct investment and it also makes it difficult for you to evade tax.

It is clear that the issue of taxation is a major issue in the international domain right now, as we speak even in the United States one of the biggest issues in their political debate and campaign debate is the issue of NAFTA, NPP this is a trade agreement and when you talk about trade agreements, the first and most important thing are the issues of waivers, duties and taxes and so it is important for us to begin to take this issue of taxation and international and double taxation very seriously in Nigeria.

I encourage Members to please pass this Bill along with the ones that come thereafter. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: I will now put the question.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second Time and referred to the Committee on Treaties, Protocols and Agreement.

**Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the
Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement
between the Federal Republic of Nigeria
And the Republic of South Korea**

A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of South Korea and for Other Related Matters (HB. 445) –

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: The third Order of the day is commencement of debate on the general principles of a Bill for an Act to Provide for the Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of South Korea and for Other Related Matters (HB. 445).

Hon. Members would recall that the Bill was read the First Time on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2016.

I now invite Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila the Leader of the House to move that the Bill be now read the Second Time.

Hon Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila: Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill for an Act to Provide for the Domestication and Enforcement in Nigeria of the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement between the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Republic of South Korea and for Other Related Matters (HB. 445) be read a Second Time.

Hon. Udende Emmanuel Memga (Katsina Ala/ Logo/Ukum): I second the Motion ably moved by the Leader.

The Speaker: Leader, I think the same arguments follow is one of *Mutatis mutandis*.

Hon Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila: Mr Speaker, I totally agree with you. I do not think we need to go into any debate as the Kingdom of Spain goes, so also the Republic of South Korea. What applies to the earlier one applies to this and there is no need for any argument. The arguments are the same.

The Speaker: Chairman Treaties

Hon. Yakub Abiodun Akanni Balogun: I want to crave the indulgence of my hon. Colleagues and the leadership to please consider along with these two - Spain and South Korea the one we deferred yesterday which was for Sweden because it is of the same nature. It was on the Order Paper yesterday.

The Speaker: Chairman, Treaties that can be re-listed, but to consider a matter that is not before us is a very strange procedure. I direct that it should be re-listed immediately but we less concern ourselves with what is before us in the Order Paper, which is the one of the Republic of South Korea. The other one can be taken subsequently. I will now put the question

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second Time and referred to the Committee on Treaties, Protocols and Agreement.

Universities Veterinary Teaching Hospitals and Veterinary Specialist Hospital (Constitution of Boards, etc.) (Establishment) Bill, 2016

A Bill for an Act to Establish the Universities Veterinary Teaching Hospitals and Veterinary Specialist Hospital (Constitution of Boards, etc.) and for Other Related Matters (HB. 568) –

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: The fourth Order of the day is commencement of debate on the general principles of a Bill for an Act to Establish the Universities Veterinary Teaching Hospitals and Veterinary Specialist Hospital (Constitution of Boards, etc.) and for Other Related Matters (HB. 568).

Hon. Members would recall the Bill was read the First Time on Thursday, 2nd June, 2016. I now invite Hon Monguno to move that the Bill be read the Second Time.

Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno (Monguno/Marte/Nganzai): I move that a Bill for an Act to Establish the Universities Veterinary Teaching Hospitals and Veterinary Specialist Hospital (Constitution of Boards, etc.) and for Other Related Matters (HB. 568) be read a Second Time.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed (Nassarawa): I second the Motion that the Bill be read the Second Time.

The Speaker: Hon. Monguno, please lead the debate.

Question proposed

Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno: This Bill is a very straightforward one and speaks for itself. It does not need much argument but that notwithstanding I will still give some few argument for the Second Reading of the Bill.

What this Bill seeks to do is to give legal framework for the existence of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital and Veterinary Specialist Hospital because they are already in existence through executive fiat. What we want to do now is to give them the legal backing and framework for their existence.

As we all know, the Veterinary Teaching Hospital like the University Teaching Hospitals that are responsible for human medicine are also statutorily charged with the responsibility of bettering for the health of our both domestic and wild animals. They are also charged with the responsibilities of training veterinaries doctors. Once this Bill passes through this House, it will give legal framework to an Institution that is already in existence by way of Executive fiat and by so doing we are only doing our job.

I urge my Colleagues to support the Second Reading of this Bill.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor (Isoko North/South): Let me first and foremost thank the author and mover of this Bill for bringing up such an issue. I also commend you because a clear responsibility of a Law maker is if a mischief is discovered it is to address it. I intend congratulating you for solving such a problem because our core responsibility in line with the provision of Section 4 is to make good laws for the good governance of this great nation.

I want to draw reference to an issue that happened on this Floor over the same issue and remembered my brother Hon. Tutu who brought a Bill similar to something of this nature over a legal framework for an Institution that already exists and based on this issue, my brother Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila opposed it vehemently. Mr. Speaker, you will remember vividly presiding that day that you set aside that particular issue.

There is something right in saying that we should try as much as correcting and so I support your proposal. I also seek that when things of this nature are discovered it is our responsibility to try as much as we can to bring them into conformity with present day reality. We must also give them all the necessary legal back-up and ensure that they stand as a legal entity. This is because without the legal framework those Institutions do not exist and when an Institution exists it must be given the necessary framework.

Hon. Edward Gyang Pwajok (Jos South/East): Let me also briefly add my voice in support of this very important Bill. Very often, we relegate issues that have to do with the health of animals to the background but have become imperative in view of the kind of deadly disease sometimes we experience. Some years ago, it was the Ebola outbreak which came from animal, the Zika virus also from animal and some Lassa fever from rats.

Mr. Speaker, if we do not take care of human health and the health of animal, that will come back

to haunt us. This kind of Bill is very progressive because we will take care of our animals because once the animals are healthy, we too will be healthy. So, we need to emphasize on how to take care of the health of veterinary institutions.

Although he said they have been in existence, but there are so many international bodies or agencies that may even want to assist our veterinary institutions. Because of lack of legal status of frameworks regulating these institutions they may be handicapped but when this comes into the law, then we will have United Nations all kinds of international agencies, they will now come in, and experts will also be accommodated in the scheme of things.

It is a progressive Bill, it is good for our own health and it is not only the lives of our animals but even our own lives. It is even good for our economy because there are people who are doing business in taking care of animals whether it is cattle, pigs or dogs, and all kinds of animals.

This kind of legislation will progressively take care of its own. I therefore support this Bill.

Hon. Femi Hakeem Gbajabiamila: Mr. Speaker, mine is just to support Hon. M. T. Monguno for the well-crafted of a Bill, even though it may be much to the chagrin of the Minority Leader who sought to make a distinction that is not there rather, draw a parallel that was not even there between the Bill that was brought by Hon. Chuchu and this one.

I will remind the House for record purposes because ordinarily I would not even respond to that, but because it will be going in the record. I will remind the House that the Bill brought then was to bring a department already in existence in INEC and make it an institution and give it a legal framework. That is not only difference from what is brought here, which is teaching hospital and not a department; a teaching hospital which is already in existence that is being given a legal framework.

There is a big difference between a department that is given a legal framework and an institution itself and that is what I just thought that I owe it a duty bound to explain the difference to the Minority Leader and other Members who do not know the difference. I just want to explain it to the Minority Leader who apparently does not know the difference.

The Speaker: And the question is that the Bill be now read a Second Time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Institutions and Colleges.

Surveyors Council of Nigeria Act, 2004 (Amendment) Bill, 2016

A Bill for an Act to amend Surveyors Council of Nigeria Act Cap S18 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004; and for Other Related Matters (HB. 545) –

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: The fifth Order of the day honourable Colleagues, is commencement of debate on a general principles of a Bill for an Act to amend Surveyors Council of Nigeria Act Cap. S18 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004; and for Other Related Matters (HB. 545).

Honourable Members will recall that the Bill was read the First Time on Wednesday, 25th May, 2016. I now invite Hon. Toby Okechukwu to move that the Bill be now read the Second Time.

Hon. Toby Okechukwu (Aninri/Agwu/Oji-Uzo): Mr. Speaker, I move for the Second Reading of a Bill for an Act to amend Surveyors Council of Nigeria Act Cap. S18 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004; and for Other Related Matters (HB. 545).

Hon. Mohammed Garba Gololo (Gamawa): Mr. Speaker, I second the Motion as ably moved by Hon. Toby.

Question proposed.

Hon. Toby Okechukwu: Mr. Speaker, the amendment being sought is a very straightforward one and aimed to bring this Act up to speed with regards to its penalty problems. It is meant to make it contemporary with realities of our economic situation.

It is a Bill with Sub-section 4 of Section 8, which provides for penalties on offences that are committed by members of the Council with regards to false information, falsification, breaches. Also, they have provided that ₦500 (Five Hundred Naira) be charged for any breach upon conviction. It is hereby sought that such charge should be ₦50,000 (Fifty Thousand Naira). Then, it also seeks to adjudge continuation of offence with regards to the breach of ₦50 (Fifty Naira) it seeks to make it ₦2,000 (Two Thousand Naira).

It also tries to make provision for some level of retention of institutional memory with regards to service of registrar of the Council where it has been provided that tenure of three years is for the Registrar to serve. Now we are amending to read that there should be a second tenure of additional three years to make sure that certain innovations or creativity that is brought to bear on this institution or retention of institution memory is not lost because somebody is serving one tenure term of three years.

My Colleagues, I urge that this amendment be admitted and passed for Second Reading.

The Speaker: This is a straightforward Bill. The question is that the Bill be now read a Second Time.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time and referred to the Committee Works.

MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Call for an Urgent Intervention in the Devastating Hurricane that Violently Torn With a Very Strong Wind Destroying over 200 Houses in Gamawa Federal Constituency of Bauchi State

The Speaker: The sixth Order of the day is a Motion but before this, there is a Matter of Urgent Public Importance. Hon. Gololo will take that first.

Hon. Mohammed Garba Gololo: Mr. Speaker, I have a Matter of Urgent Public Importance under Order VIII, Rule 46. It is a Motion on a call for an urgent intervention in the devastating hurricane that violently torn with a very strong wind destroying over 200 houses in Gamawa Federal Constituency of Bauchi State.

I also move that we suspend relevant Rules to enable the House consider the Motion immediately.

Hon. Okechukwu Toby: I second the Motion as moved.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do consider the Motion calling for an urgent intervention in the devastating hurricane that violently torn with a very strong wind destroying over 200 houses in Gamawa Federal Constituency of Bauchi State as a Matter of Urgent Public Importance.

The Speaker: Is there any seconder that we suspend our Rules to enable him take the Motion?

Hon. Golu Timothy (Pankshin/Kanke/Kanam): I second the Motion as moved by my Colleague.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That Order VIII, Rule 46 (3) be suspended for the matter to be taken immediately.

The Speaker: Hon. Gololo, you can now move your Motion.

Hon. Mohammed Garba Gololo: Mr. Speaker, I rise to move a Motion on a call for an urgent intervention in the devastating hurricane that violently torn with a very strong wind destroying over 200 houses in Gamawa Federal Constituency of Bauchi State.

The House:

Notes that a devastating hurricane violently stormed some communities in Gamawa Federal Constituency with very strong wind destroying over 200 houses, farm produce and has impacted negatively on the people;

Also notes that some communities in Gamawa Federal Constituency are without shelter amidst rainfall as a result of this strong hurricane storm;

Aware that the majority of the indigenes and residents of the affected communities have become homeless and seeking refuge as their houses are destroyed;

Informed that the extent of destruction is in excess of over ₦100 million;

Concerned that this situation could destabilise and jeopardise the livelihood of the indigenes and their economic activities;

Desirous of alleviating the suffering and losses of the affected communities; and ensuring that such disaster does not re-occur.

Resolves to:

- (i) Commiserate with the affected communities;

- (ii) Urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to urgently provide relief and support to the affected communities;
- (iii) Mandate the Committees on Works, Environment and Habitat to visit the communities and to investigate the cause of the hurricane and recommend a permanent solution to the House within six weeks.

Hon. Albert Abiodun Adeogun (Ife Central/Ife East/Ife North/Ife South): I second the Motion as moved by Hon. Gololo.

The Speaker: Pursuant to our Standing Orders, I will put the Question

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved to:

Resolved to:

- (i) Commiserate with the affected communities;
- (ii) Urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to urgently provide relief and support to the affected communities;
- (iii) Mandate the Committees on Works, Environment and Habitat to visit the communities and to investigate the cause of the hurricane and recommend a permanent solution to the House within six weeks.

(Pursuant to Order 51 (5) of the Standing Orders of the House, Motion accordingly referred to the Committees on Works, Environment and Habitat and Emergency and Disaster Management)

MOTIONS

Urgent Need to Commence Generation of Electricity through Coal

The Speaker: The sixth Order of the day is a Motion on Urgent Need to Commence Generation of Electricity through Coal, standing in the name of Hon. Ahmed Abu.

Hon. Abu is now invited to move the Motion.

Hon. Ahmed Abu (Edati/Lavun/Mokwa): My Motion is on the Urgent Need to Commence Generation of Electricity through Coal.

The House:

Notes that Coal, mainly sub-bituminous steam Coals (except for the Lafia-Obi bituminous Cooking Coal) occurrences in Nigeria have been indicated in more than 22 Coalfields spread over 13 States of the Federation;

Also notes that the proven Coal reserves so far in Nigeria total about 639 million metric tons while the inferred reserves sum up to 2.75 billion metric tons, and presently, the Nigeria's Coal Industry has 4 existing mines, namely Okpara and Onyema Underground Mines in Enugu State, Aba surface mine in Kogi State and Owukpa underground mine in Benue State, in addition to more than 13 undeveloped Coal fields;

Aware that Coal has many important uses, the most significant of which is in electricity generation as around 7.1 billion tons were used worldwide in 2010, for that purpose; and its share as the biggest single source of energy for electricity production is growing;

Concerned that there has been an un-ending fall in electricity generation which worsened on Thursday, 24th March, 2016 when there occurred a total system collapse at exactly 1pm, when the nation went to ground zero, with all the Distribution Companies (DISCOs) receiving zero MW allocation from the System Operator;

Also concerned that this never-ending fall in electricity generation has been attributed to vandalism of gas pipelines and the on-going difficulty in the downstream oil industry is also impacting negatively on the power sector which is strategic for increasing the competitiveness of the Nigerian economy;

Observes that greater investments of resources in the power sector would ultimately result in improvement of the economy and therefore well-being of the nation;

Cognizant that considering the prevailing situation, power sector initiative cannot be done with the desired big bang without the Federal Government providing leadership in a sustainable way;

Resolves to:

- (i) Urge the Federal Government of Nigeria to put all necessary machineries in Motion that will lead to generation of electricity through

coal in all the States where there is proven and inferred coal reserves; and

- (ii) Also urge it to create conducive environment to attract private sector investments in the coal sector, including the issuance of Sovereign Guarantee to foreign investors.

Hon. Ebonyi Kingsley Sunny (Enugu East/Isi-Uzo): I second the Motion as moved.

The Speaker: Hon. Abu, you may now lead the debate.

(Mr. Speaker withdraws from the Chamber)

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Hon. Ahmed Abu: All this Motion is trying to say is that there is a need for us to start rethinking the future. We cannot continue to run the power sector on auto pilot whereby we continue doing the same thing back and forth with little or no result.

For months, we have had debates on this Floor on diversification of the economy. But the big question is this: How do you diversify the economy without stable electricity? There is a need we look into coal, which is very cheap and is available.

We are losing small industries because they are competing with companies in China, in US, in India where they are using coal and we go there to import most of the things we use in this country. I will give you an example, where we lost industries to other companies abroad. Gaskiya Textile (I believe there are Members from Kano here) was founded by late Alhaji Badamasi in the late 80's. He started doing groundnut pyramid with the Dantatas, buying groundnut and etc. From trading, he went into confectioneries, production of sweet. From sweet, he went into textile.

Now this very factory was the largest in the whole West Africa at that time. In fact the present President, President Muhammadu Buhari was the Head of State at the time. He commissioned this factory. Gaskiya Textile at that time had over 2,000 staff. In the 80's they were buying raw materials (cotton) at that time worth ₦500,000,000. They were buying chemicals at that time worth over ₦200,000,000. The President was so impressed that he granted the company tax waiver between three to five years because of what they were doing and the employment the company was creating at that time. And even when General Babangida became the Head

of States, he took two visiting Presidents to that same factory – President from Ghana and President from Senegal.

Today, Gaskiya Textile is no more. Even when the proposed NEXIM bank loan facility to textile industry came on board, more textile companies refused to go and access this loan. Why? The money is available, I guess about ₦70,000,000 or thereabout. The money was made available but they refused to go and access this fund because of the lack of stable electricity. They said, if they access this fund, they would end up losing their factory. That is the typical example of what is happening to our industries in this country. We concentrate on the accessories in the sense that we keep rolling on ideas and policies etc.

Now we are going into agriculture – rice. We are having rice mills all over the place. The same fate that the textile industries suffered is likely going to happen to all these rice mills that are springing up all over the place if we do not address the issue of power. Because we concentrate on the accessories, is just like a phone. Take a phone; either Hi-phone or Samsung; you take out the battery – it is nothing! It is absolutely nothing! So, rather than concentrate on accessories, I think we should concentrate on the basic, which is electricity. Now, let me quote before we go further the former Environmental Minister and Climate negotiator, Jerry Jamaica who is from India and I quote: *We cannot abandon coal; it would be suicidal on our part to give up coal for the next fifteen to twenty years; at least giving the need.*

Why I make reference to this coal is that there are people that would argue based on climate change. But the question is, what about climate justice? Other countries are doing it – US, India, China. If we do not diversify we will decide to look into coal how do we face these new challenges that are coming up in the country as unemployment, insecurity and security itself. If our industries are not working, I think the threat to our unity is when we are not having a growing economy. So, I urge you to support this Motion even if you disagree with some of the things that are in it, I think we should pass it and discuss any other thing later.

I so submit, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Toby Okechukwu: This Motion is very auspicious. Yesterday, I had opportunity to attend the Workshop with regard to power and what we discovered was that we have three potential sources of power. That is hydro, gas fired powered (the thermal ones) and then through coal.

Even if we do our best struggling at hundred *per cent* speed by 2020, we can only get hydro; coal will take about 33 *per cent* of our power generation and gas will take about 67 *per cent* and yet we have not started. And unfortunately, the situation we have found ourselves in this country is that major source of our power supply today is under threat and that is essential. This is because the western gas pipe-line that runs through and connected to most of our gas fired power plants is under attack.

The Eastern gas fired stations are not connected to the western pipelines and when there is any challenge, it is not possible to correct the situation. Unfortunately, we do not have any options and a country that has the opportunity of having coal, having hydro should not be in this situation we are in. I was at Nigerian Ports Authority a few months back. What I saw was that Dangote was importing coal from South Africa. I was sad and that is because we do not pay attention to what we should pay attention to.

I fully subscribe to the Motion that my Colleague has moved. I was there at that Workshop yesterday with the Attorney from Plateau State. We were surprised. Investment in coal should have been done yesterday. The urgency of the moment and the urgency of now and what we are actually going through, we are helped by the juggler because of the situation in Niger-Delta. This country should not be in that situation.

We have coal mines in Enugu State. We have it in thirty States of the Federation and we are failing to exploit it and that is the cheapest source of power you can ever get. So, I believe whatever the challenges are, we should be in a position to overcome and time to do that is now. This is because no country, no society, no organisation presupposes that when you do not have an option, you are just destined for perdition and that is not our expectation. And these are industries that worked in the past.

So, let us stop paying lip service to it; is a basic thing. It is a condition precedent to industrialisation; and it is a condition precedent to diversifying the economic. So, basic things first! And coal fire power plants are quick ways. There are a lot of people indicating interest from other countries. Let us look at our policies and priorities and do those things first. When for instance we know gas is cheap and all that, it becomes very expensive at certain times when you are challenged or when you are in trouble as it is now.

I am seeking the support of my Colleagues that we should support this Motion. I so submit.

Hon. Oke Busayo Oluwole (Obokun/Oriade): Mr. Speaker, in support of this Bill, I would like to observe that it is not only auspicious as said by my Colleague, it is timely and apt.

It is not news that we have huge coal deposits across the length and breadth of this country, starting from Gombe State, Nasarawa, and Benue to Enugu and even Ondo State. Unfortunately, our leaders in the past have used the power sector particularly the hydro and gas sector as a conduit pipe to loot in this country.

It is high time we take advantage of our capacity in the coal sector. In Poland, they have a population of 38 million people, but it generates 48 thousand megawatts. 98 *per cent* of that power generated in Poland is from coal sector. From records, it was a Polish company that built the coal mine in Enugu. They are still maintaining their own coal mines and they are generating power. As a matter of fact, even sending power to their neighbouring countries; but here in Nigeria, the coal mine plant in Enugu is in comatose; we are chasing shadows. If truly we want to do justice to power sector because that is the only sector that we need to put in place to accelerate industrialization. Even in our service sector as well, because we virtually need power on daily basis to function as a nation.

Without wasting our time, I want to commend my colleague Hon. Ahmed for being thoughtful for bringing this Motion before the Parliament. I also urge my Colleagues that we should all support this Motion. I so submit.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Jimmy Benson and lastly Hon. Nnenna.

Hon. Babajimi Adegoke Benson (Ikorodu): Mr. Speaker, the rule of the thumb says that for every one million people you need one thousand megawatts. In Nigeria, we are a people of about 160 to 170 million people; we only have three thousand megawatts.

Like was rightly said by my honourable Colleague, our energy mix is limited, we have coal, hydro and gas. As we speak, the coal industry is the least developed of the lot. Furthermore, Nigeria's GDP is valued at about \$500 Billion. It is the biggest in Africa in spite of the fact that we generate only three thousand megawatts of power. I use this medium to commend the Nigerian workforce for living up to expectation and being very resilient that despite the power challenges we have, we are still the biggest economy in Africa.

Imagine how Nigeria would be if we had the type and the quantum of power that India has. Nigeria with \$500 Billion economy, India with its constant power supply has an economy that is valued at \$2,000 Trillion; the gap is not much. What we need to do is to ramp up on our generation of electricity. This Motion could not have come at a better time because coal is what we are waiting for. The development of the coal industry will really add value and accelerate our growth. I therefore use this medium to endorse his resolutions accordingly.

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma: Mr. Speaker, I lend my voice to this Motion and of course, adopt all the submissions of the people who have spoken before me as if they were mine.

Let me say that this is one Motion that actually speaks to the intendment and the drive of the reality that Nigeria finds herself; a need for diversification, a need for growth and the drive towards Nigeria becoming one of the truly industrialized nations by the year 2030. Sometimes Nigeria comes up with all these policy aspirations that are pipe dreams, as if we do not have the plan to set it in motion. This Motion is very simple; it speaks to coal, to power.

My colleague Hon. Jimi Benson spoke about \$500 Billion economy, but it is also said that there is an additional \$500 Billion that is trapped outside the former economic sector that is trapped of course with our lack of power and unskilled labour. If indeed Nigeria seeks to grow to the extent where Nigeria is indeed the economic power house that she sees herself as, then we cannot domicile ourselves within one sector and continue to give the excuse because everybody speaks to Nigeria's lack of industrialization as the power problem.

Let me also say that Nigeria has also gone a step ahead because people, environmentalists are going to come up with the argument about clean fuel and clean power. But Nigeria is a signatory to all the climate change agreements; the counter protocol and so on; that take in anticipation of the degradation of our environment in the event that we actually start to explore coal to power.

So, this is a policy of government that is just waiting to take off because everything is in place, we have coal in 13 States in the country. In Enugu State, we had one that was fully functional until it became comatose for whatever reasons and we are talking about fiscal federalism, about building the regions, growing and attracting funds to all the regions in such a way that Nigeria grows together.

I have not heard anything recently as forward-thinking as positive as this Motion because it is time for us to actually start to speak to the policy on diversification. It is time for us to start to seek alternative means of funding the country. It is time for us to actually start to have policies that speaks to the intendment of government.

The truth of the matter is that every day on the Floor of Parliament we talk about the oil prices and the fact that they are languishing dangerously is affecting dollars per barrel. It is becoming retiring and we also speak to the fact that Nigeria is one of the most blessed countries in the world. The reason why they continue to talk about the potentials of Nigeria is because all these potentials have not been tapped into.

So, this is an opportunity for us to stop been a potentially great country but to become a truly great country. This is one of the ways and I do hope that having said it on the Floor of Parliament, this call to power policy is one policy that is going to be taken to a logical conclusion, so that whatever burden we have on gas and hydro will now be shifted and spread out. With this, Nigeria can indeed be one of the most industrialised nations because as our population grows so do our power needs grow and as our power needs grow, we must as a country start to seek alternative.

Therefore, I will like to congratulate my Colleague for bringing this Motion and I urge my Colleagues to please support it in the best interest of our country.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much. There is an amendment here. I know, Hon. Sheriff, everybody knows the importance of Coal. In fact, all over the world, nations that have succeeded in generating enough power, they do from Coal. There is an amendment to the Prayer from Hon. Isiaka.

Hon Isiaka is now invited to move the Motion for his amendment.

Amendment proposed.

Hon. Isiaka Ayokunle Ibrahim (Ifọ/Ewekoro): My amendment is that: a high powered *Ad-hoc* Committee should be constituted to evaluate and come up with something workable for the usage of Coal to generate electricity in Nigeria.

The Deputy Speaker: His amendment is that, he is asking the House to constitute a powerful *Ad-hoc* Committee to evaluate the proposal for Coal usage

and report back to the House within four weeks. But since there is Committee on Power, and the Committee itself is powerful, can you formally withdraw your amendment?

Hon. Isiaka Ayokunle Ibrahim: I wish to step down the amendment.

Amendment by the leave of the House withdrawn accordingly

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved to:

- (i) Urge the Federal Government of Nigeria to put all necessary machineries in Motion that will lead to generation of electricity through coal in all the States where there is proven and inferred coal reserves; and
- (ii) Also urge it to create conducive environment to attract private sector investments in the coal sector, including the issuance of Sovereign Guarantee to foreign investors.

(Pursuant to the provision of Order VIII, Rule 51(5) of the Standing Orders of the House, the Motion referred to the Committee on Power)

Call for Investigation of Alleged Irregularities Surrounding the Centenary City Project

The Deputy Speaker: The seventh Order of the day is a Motion on the Call for Investigation of Alleged Irregularities Surrounding the Centenary City Project standing in the name of Hon. Timothy Golu. Hon. Golu is now invited to move the Motion.

Hon. Timothy Golu Simeon: Mr. Speaker, I move this Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper. It is a call for investigation of alleged irregularities surrounding the Abuja Centenary City Project.

The House:

Notes that the Federal Government had recently conceptualised and on the taking an Abuja Centenary City Development Project which was alleged piloted by the Office of the then Secretary to the Government of the Federation;

Concerned that the Centenary City Project was marred with irregularities which may have cost the

Federal Government and Federal Capital Development Administration Billions of Naira of revenues and loss of thousands of hectares of land;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committee on Federal Capital Territory to undertake an investigation to determine whether the Centenary City Project was carried out in accordance with the extant laws, rules and in the best interest of Nigeria and report back to the House within one month for further legislative action.

The Deputy Speaker: Thank you very much, Hon. Golu. Before I ask for seconder, I want to ask the Chairman of the House Committee on Federal Capital Territory whether this one is not similar to the job that you have been doing for the last few weeks.

Hon. Iorwase Herman Hembe (Konshisha/Vandekiya): Thank you Mr. Chairman, the job we have been doing for the last few weeks which we have just concluded is different from the Centenary City Project.

The Deputy Speaker: Any seconder to the Motion?

Hon. Udende Emmanuel Memga: I second the Motion as moved by Hon. Timothy Golu.

Hon. Timothy Golu Simeon: In brief Mr. Speaker, I want to say that this project is supposed to be a suavely funded investment that was aimed to add value to the commercial status of this country. It was to make Abuja City like other Cities of Dubai, Monaco, Singapore and the rest of them. Actually, it was meant to be a take-off point that will show case Abuja through the Abuja Centenary City to the international world.

Government was not expected to be involved in the project. There was supposed to be a mobilisation of investment from investors so as to kick-start the project. The project was also supposed to see to the fact that Abuja original land owners of the Gwagwa Area near Kuje District, the area that was earmarked for the project were meant to be compensated before the take-off of the project. Unfortunately as I speak now, there is restiveness on the part of the land owners because a lot of funds were said to have been released in the name of compensation and yet the original land owners were not compensated.

According to report, over ₦2 billion was said to have been released but only about ₦300 million was

given to the land owners and it is a breach of the agreement that was already entered and because they are not compensated, the original owners were threatening to disrupt the continuation of the project. Besides that, there was a military base that was located in the area and government released about ₦2 billion again for the relocation of that military base to another area.

There are so many irregularities involving the release of funds from government coffers against the principles that government was not supposed to be involved in the project and as a result of this, there are so many things that were said to have marred the project. It is a call on this House to really take time to investigate whether actually the project was conceived in the best interest of the nation and if it is so, what went wrong and how do we rectify this?

That is why I am calling on the House to mandate the FCT Committee to take a look at the entire project, if it is a project that should go on, let it go on. Whatever had gone wrong let it be corrected so that fundamental goal for which the project was conceived can be achieved.

I seek for your support so that any other issue that has come up in this House that is in the best interest of this nation, we look into it so that Nigeria can move forward, so that Abuja City which is dawn presently, the capital of this great country can be able to move up to equip itself to commercial Cities as I have mentioned around the world.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved to:

Mandate the Committee on Federal Capital Territory to undertake an investigation to determine whether the Centenary City Project was carried out in accordance with the extant laws, rules and in the best interest of Nigeria and report back to the House within one month for further legislative action.

(Motion accordingly referred to the Committee on Federal Capital Territory)

Need for an Improved Funding for the Amnesty Programme and a Suitable Strategic Plan to End Militancy in the Niger Delta

The Deputy Speaker: The eighth Order of the day is a Motion on the Need for an Improved Funding for the Amnesty Programme and a Suitable Strategic Plan to End Militancy in the Niger Delta, standing in the name of Hon. Ekpenyong Essien Ayi

and 30 others. Hon. Ayi is invited to move the Motion.

Hon. Ayi Essien Ekpenyong (Calabar South/Akpabuyo/Bakassi): I move the Motion on the Need for an Improved Funding for the Amnesty Programme and a Suitable Strategic Plan to End Militancy in the Niger Delta Region.

The House:

Notes that the incidence of militancy in the Niger-Delta between 2006 and 2009 cut Nigeria's oil production by more than a quarter to around 1.6 mbd;

Also notes that as a result of the militancy, the late President Umaru Yar'Adua introduced the Amnesty Programme in 2009 where about 30,000 militants who had sabotaged oil facilities for years laid down their arms and embraced the amnesty programme;

Aware that the peace achieved as a result of the 2009 Amnesty Programme brought about a rebound in oil output from around 1.6 mbd to about 2.8 mbd, resulting in higher oil revenues for Nigeria;

Worried that the ₦20,000,000,000.00 proposed by the Federal Government for the Presidential Amnesty Office in 2016 budget is lower than the ₦55,824,488,493.27 proposed by the Presidential Amnesty Office and the amount is grossly inadequate to sustain the payment of stipends to 25,000 ex-agitators, pay in-training allowances, tuition fees and other commitments;

Also worried that this massive cut from the proposed ₦55,824,488,493.27 of the Amnesty Office has threatened the sustainability of the amnesty programme and this has led to a resurgence of militancy as the militants are being owed arrears of stipends which has in turn led to slump in oil production which fell to 1.76 mbd in February, 1.68 mbd in March and 1.62 in April, according to the International Energy Agency;

Concerned that an explosion caused by acts of militancy forced Chevron Corporation to close a near-shore valve platform that had been handling 35,000 b/d of crude;

Also concerned that Shell Petroleum Development Corporation declared a force majeure on exports of Bonny Light crude after the Nembe Creek Trunk line was damaged by militants and the closure affected 75,000-78,000 b/d of crude;

Disturbed that acts of militancy in February led to a marine pipeline cut flow through the important Forcados Crude Oil Terminal by as much as 250,000 b/d;

Also disturbed that on 22 May, 2016, militants bombed the Tebidaba to Brass pipeline belonging to the Nigerian Agip Oil Company at Ikienghenbiri community in Southern Ijaw Local Government Area of Bayelsa State for the second time in one week;

Observes that the attacks, which have also targeted gas infrastructure in the region, have also impacted negatively on electricity output in the form of thermal power stations that are reliant on gas to power their turbines;

Also observes that the incessant attacks on oil facilities has led to Nigeria losing its place as Africa's largest oil producer because its oil output has fallen to a 22-year low of 1.4 million barrels per day against the budgetary target of 2.2mbpd, and by 1 June, 2016, it was about 990,000 barrel per day;

Resolves to:

- (i) Urge the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan to end militancy in the Niger Delta rather than the confrontational approaches so far adopted; and
- (ii) Also urge the leadership of the House to interface with the Federal Government with a view to assisting in securing the additional ₦35,824,488,493.27 shortfall for the Amnesty Office. I so move.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma (Ukwa East/ West): I second the Motion ably moved by Ekpennyong.

The Deputy Speaker: In the course of moving the Motion, the Motion has been exhaustively discussed. Let us go to the amendment.

Amendment proposed.

Hon. Archibong Henry Okon (Itu/Ibiono Ibom): My amendment has to do with resolution number one; that is Urging the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan to end militancy in the Niger Delta rather than the confrontational approaches so far adopted and go into negotiation with the militants so as to forestall further damage to the oil installation and further deepening of the oil generation.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Archibong, let me guide you. If you read Prayer one very well, if you ask the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan, part of it could be negotiation. It would be some sort of tautology adding that. But if you do not see it like that, I would ask for secondment.

Hon. Archibong Henry Okon: Why I am saying this is that during the town hall meeting in Akwa Ibom State, a Minister of Federal Republic had said he does not support negotiation. I feel if such comes in, then probably they may not put negotiation into it. That is why I am pressing on it.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Archibong, I still insist that you leave your amendment out because to formulate a sustainable development plan, definitely you have to sit with some people and negotiation would be part of it. Your amendment is withdrawn by the leave of the House.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor: I am coming with a third resolution, which is urge the militant to give peace a chance, stall forthwith the bombing and destruction of our facilities, embrace dialogue, which would stop further destruction of our ecosystem.

The Deputy Speaker: I wanted to give the Minority Leader that opportunity being one of seniors, but everybody should come with his written amendment. If there is no written amendment here, I am not going to take any further amendment. I would hold on for thirty seconds.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor: Mr. Speaker, my amendment reads thus; "*Urge the militants to give peace a chance and embrace dialogue with the Federal Government*". I think that will take care of that.

The Deputy Speaker: Please, submit your amendment to the Clerk. Is there any seconder?

Hon. Archibong Henry Okon (Itu/Ibiono Ibom): Mr. Speaker, I second the amendment as proposed by the Minority Leader.

Amendment put and agreed to.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Herman Hembe, read your amendment and submit it, please.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr. Speaker, my amendment is that you will amend Prayer (i) instead of saying *Urge the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan to end militancy in the*

Niger Delta”, rather than “*the confrontational approach so far adopted*”.

I do not see the Federal Government adopting any confrontational approach to the Niger Delta; therefore, I propose an amendment saying: “*Urge the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan to end militancy in the Niger Delta*”. This is because the Federal Government has not adopted any confrontation in the Niger Delta; it has been peaceful so far (*Interruption*).

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Hembe, take your seat, please. His amendment is that we should delete that part that says “*Confrontational approach so far adopted*”.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed: Mr. Speaker, I second the amendment made by Hon. Hembe which was exactly the same amendment I wanted to make.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, the amendment reads thus:

Urge the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan to end militancy in the Niger Delta.

Amendment put and negated.

The Deputy Speaker: Anyway, we know that we have asked the Federal Government and we are urging the Federal Government, which is the Executive Arm of Government to formulate a sustainable plan, and so they are going to do that.

Hon. Golu, your amendment is not here with me and you have not written one. You should always submit your amendment here and you move but I will give you that benefit today. Any time you move an amendment, you should write and submit it to the Clerk and then you move from that Table. Please, go ahead and move your amendment.

Hon. Golu Timothy: Thank you Mr. Speaker, for that leniency. Hon. Colleagues, mine is additional amendment, which reads thus:

On the need for the Federal Government to reassess of review the Amnesty Programme to ensure that areas requiring adjustment be accommodated to take care of present situations.

The Deputy Speaker: You see, there is no way I can help now, because your amendment is not here. His amendment reads thus:

The need for the Federal Government to review the Amnesty Programme to ensure that areas requiring adjustment be accommodated to take care of present situations.

Hon. Golu, I hope you are paying attention, nobody is seconding this Motion; so the implication is that you have to withdraw it or I will help you to withdraw it.

Hon. Golu Timothy: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of any secondment, I take the leave of the House to withdraw the amendment for today.

(Amendment, accordingly withdrawn by leave of the House)

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Oluwale Oke, move your amendment, please.

Hon. Oke Busayo Oluwale: Mr. Speaker, my amendment is that Prayer (ii) should be amended to read thus:

“The Federal Government should make available the shortfall because of the urgency involved”, that the ex-militants are being paid their allowances. So, the Federal Government should make available their allowances, so that the Niger Delta Avengers will not draw these ex-militants back to violence.

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Members, before I ask for secondment, I want every Member to read that particular Prayer. It is already inclusive of what he is saying; it is already there. According to Lawyers, we do not have superfluous in this case. Prayer (ii) says: “*Also urge the leadership of the House to interface with the Federal Government with a view to assisting in securing the additional ₦35,824,488,493.27 shortfall for the Amnesty Office*”.

Several hon. Members: That is going to be a long process.

The Deputy Speaker: It is all right, since they say it is a long process, any seconder for the amendment? Hon. Oghene.

Hon. Oghene Emma Ego (Amuwo Odofin): Mr. Speaker, I second the amendment ably moved by my leader, Hon. Oke.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Main Question as amended put and agreed to.

Resolved to:

- (i) Urge the Federal Government to formulate a sustainable plan to end militancy in the Niger Delta rather than the confrontational approaches so far adopted;
- (ii) Also urge the leadership of the House to interface with the Federal Government with a view to assisting in securing the additional ₦35,824,488,493.27 shortfall for the Amnesty Office; and
- (iii) Further urge the militants to give peace a chance and embrace dialogue with the Federal Government in the interest of the Niger Delta Region.

(Motion accordingly referred to the Committee on Niger-Delta Ministry).

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

The Deputy Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, the ninth Order of the day is consideration of six Reports of the Committee on Public Petitions. I will now invite Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta to move for consideration of the Reports.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Mr. Speaker, from the House Committee on Public Petitions, we have Reports to be considered and they are numbered (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f). May I crave your indulgence to move *(Interruptions)*.

The Speaker: Hon. Abonta, I think the Parliamentary procedure is that you should read out the Reports one after the other. So, let us save time.

Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Iduemre Ochuko, Against the University of Benin on Alleged Wrongful Termination of Appointment

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Mr. Speaker, I crave the indulgence of the House to add that Report (e) is not fully available as we do not produce enough. So, we have to step it down. I therefore, proceed that the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Iduemre Ochuko, against the University of Benin on allege wrongful termination of appointment against the University of Benin on alleged wrongful termination of appointment and approve the recommendation therein.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr Speaker, I second the Motion ably moved by Hon. Abonta.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Iduemre Ochuko, against the University of Benin on allege wrongful termination of appointment against the University of Benin on alleged wrongful termination of appointment.

Report on the Petition by Women Arise for Change Initiative Against The Nigerian Police Force

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: I also move that the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Women Arise for Change Initiative on behalf of the family of Mr. Godwin Udoh against the Nigerian Police Force and approve the recommendations therein.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr Speaker, I second the Motion ably moved by Hon. Abonta.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Women Arise for Change Initiative on behalf of the family of Mr. Godwin Udoh against the Nigerian Police Force.

Report on the Petition by Retired Police Officers Against the National Pension Commission

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: I move that the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Retired Police Officers against the National Pension Commission and approve the recommendations therein.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr Speaker, I second the Motion ably moved by Hon. Abonta.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Retired Police Officers against the National Pension Commission.

Report on the Petition by Asimiyu Sikiru Against the Nigeria Police Force

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Asimiyu Sikiru against the Nigeria Police Force seeking reinstatement into the service and approve the recommendations therein.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr. Speaker, I second the Motion ably moved by Hon. Abonta.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Asimiyu Sikiru against the Nigeria Police Force seeking reinstatement into the service.

Report on the Petition by Mrs. Juliet Obiageli Jim Nwachukwu Against Zenith Bank Plc

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Mr. Speaker, I plead that item (e), which is the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mrs. Juliet Obiageli Jim Nwachukwu against Zenith Bank PLC on alleged indefinite suspension from duty without pay since September 2006 is not available. We will bring it back again.

(Report by leave of the House stood down).

Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr. Mathew Mohammed against the Federal Road Safety Commission on Alleged Wrongful Dismissal from Service

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: I move that the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr. Mathew Mohammed against the Federal Road Safety Commission on alleged wrongful dismissal from service and approve the recommendations therein.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr Speaker, I second the Motion ably moved by Hon. Abonta.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr. Mathew Mohammed against the Federal Road Safety Commission on alleged wrongful dismissal from service.

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do resolve into Committee of the Whole for the consideration of the Reports.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed: I second the Motion moved by Hon. Hembe.

Question put and agreed to.

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on a Petition by Mr Iduemre Ochuko against University of Benin on Alleged Wrongful Termination of Appointment – CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

The Chairman: The first Report to be considered is a Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr Iduemre Ochuko against the University of Benin on Alleged Wrongful Termination of Appointment.

I now invite Hon. Abonta to speak on this Report

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Mr. Chairman, this is a Report involving a staff of the University of Benin. In fact, this decision commenced in the 7th Assembly and was completed and was not considered. It re-appeared again and we looked at it and after all the saying, the University of Benin agreed to take him back, but I wanted an order.

Therefore, this resolution from the Committee is praying that Management of University of Benin to review the withdrawal of appointment of Mr Iduemre Ochuko with a view of reinstating and paying him all accrued benefits dated back to the date of the withdrawal of his appointment.

The Chairman: Thank you, Chairman. There is just one recommendation for this Report. In light of the findings, the Committee makes this recommendation, which I will put the question on:

Question put and agreed to.

Recommendation:

Urge the Management of the University of Benin to review the withdrawal of appointment of the Petitioner, Mr Iduemre Ochuko, with a view to re-stating and paying him all accrued benefits dating back to the date of the withdrawal of his appointment – *agreed to.*

Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Women Arise for Change Initiative on behalf of the family of Mr. Godwin Udoh against the Nigerian Police Force – CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

The Chairman: The next Report to be considered is a Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Women Arise for Change Initiative on behalf of the family of Mr. Godwin Udoh against the Nigerian Police Force.

I now invite Hon. Abonta to speak on the Report.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Mr. Chairman, the Report is a very pathetic one and it is from a pressure group of Women Arise for Change Initiative on behalf of Godwin Udoh. What happened was that at a check point a Police Officer for want of extorting ₦50 shot and killed the lady on the spot and terribly injured the husband and both jaw entirely tore off and thereby inflicting very grievous harm on Mr. Godwin Udoh, while he lost his wife instantly for their refusal to pay ₦50 to the Police Officer at the check point.

During the investigation, the Police also conceded to quite a lot of things which we pointed out here and the Police on their own had already taken care of the medical bill, provided shelter, payment of school fees and some other things. We are saying that be that as it may, this may not be sufficient or enough in the circumstances.

The Committee recommends that the House do urge the Federal Government and the Police to ensure that adequate compensation and welfare package is given to the bereaved family. Therefore, we arrived at the recommendations (i) – (iv) as stated in the Report.

We also reasoned that the police may not have the capacity to have Educational Trust Fund for the family; therefore we want to also amend if the House agrees to direct that the Federal Government through Educational Scholarship Board should grant them Scholarship to the University level. If you allow the police alone, they may not be able to create that Trust Fund but since Nigeria can afford to give them scholarship through the Ministry of Education and provide adequate scholarship and since the Nigeria police killed.

The Chairman: You are the Chairman of the Committee, are you telling us to delete or you want to make a straight amendment?

Amendment proposed.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: I am not making an amendment, I am not deleting.

The Chairman: What is the amendment?

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Instead of saying urge, it should be to direct the Federal Ministry of Education to provide. Mr. Chairman, can I allow the Floor to add to this amendment?

The Chairman: Hon. Archibong, listen and let us be guided. This Report has just one recommendation broken into 4 Sub-recommendation. We want to consider the recommendation, and you can only speak to it.

Hon. Archibong Henry Okon: Thank you Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity. My amendment is that the Police Officer that shot this lady should be prosecuted

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma: Observation!

Mr Chairman: You have an observation?

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma: Yes, Sir.

Mr Chairman: All right.

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma: Thank you very much for yielding the Floor to me. My concern is on the words '*reasonable monetary compensation*'. I do not understand this and is very ambiguous.

Mr Chairman: All right. What is your take on this?

Hon. Elendu-Ukeje Nnenna Ijeoma: You cannot put a price on human life but reasonable is also very ambiguous and do not speak to the issue. I was hoping that the Chairman will be able to shed some light on what he considered to be reasonable, so that we can fix it there. I cannot put a price on human life, but think the word *reasonable* is very open-ended and ambiguous.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Yes, I agree with my sister, but we use the word *reasonable* is because prior to the incident the man was driving a *Keke* before he was shot with the wife and she died; Police has provided him with a Combo Bus and made some money available. In view of Recommendations (iii)

and (iv), we said reasonable, which means adequate. They have uplifted him from *Keke Napep* to a bus.

Mr Chairman: At this Point, is Hon Nnenna agreeing to what the Chairman has said since the man has been in one way compensated to some extent?

Question put and agreed to.

Recommendation (i) – (That reasonable monetary compensation be paid to the family of the deceased) – agreed to

Recommendation (ii) – (That the Federal Government and the Police should ensure provision of a decent accommodation for the immediate family) – agreed to.

Recommendation (iii) – (That the Police and the Federal Government should ensure the grant of scholarship to three (3) of the deceased children up to University level) – agreed to.

Recommendation (iv) - (That the Federal Government and the Police should ensure full payment of the medical bill of Mr Godwin Udoh and complete Health Insurance package for the family) – agreed to.

Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Retired Police Officers against the National Pension Commission – CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

Mr Chairman: The next Report to be considered is a Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Retired Police Officers against the National Pension Commission. I now invite Hon Abonta to speak on this Report.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Thank you, Mr Chairman. This is also a very dicey Report. It is a Petition by the Retired Police Officers against the National Pension Commission, which was a misdirected decision and their argument is that they were enjoying a better Pension, but after the National Assembly passed the law and created a new Pension review, they are now getting less Pension.

They pray if they be allowed to migrate back to the previous regime and we told them this may not be feasible except we now re-write the law and on the note we made the insinuation at the Committee after a careful position and consideration of all the materials passed in this matter and proffer the following issues for determination. It is whether or not the House can direct the National Pension Commission to pay the balance of ₦25 lump sum to

the petitioners that were paid 25 agencies of 50 and also ratify the shortage; whether the House can move the Nigerian Police Force from the PENCOR Act 2014 as amended without repealing the Act.

Arising from the above presumption, the Committee know that the Federal Government had already given positive directives on some of this demand by the petitioners to the effect that all Pension issues of Police Affairs be addressed administratively within the framework of the Contributory Pension Scheme. That the prayer of the petitioner should be moved to the erstwhile defined benefit scheme in a matter of law which require their amendment of the PENCOR Act while the Committee appreciates the merit of the Petition.

However, the petitioners' claim of underpayment is not sustainable as the petitioners are unable to clearly show that they were indeed short changed in the payment of their entitlements. As a result, the Committee aligned itself with the Nigeria Pension Commission to direct the Petitioners to forward all relevant documents to PENCOR for verification.

Committee's Recommendation: Direct the Petitioners - Retired Police Officers of Nigeria to forward all relevant documents on the matter to PENCOR for verification and possible rectification of the said underpayment of their 50 *per cent* lump sum retirements benefits, if any.

The House to note that the Petitioners' request to migrate from the present contributory Pension Scheme to the Old Scheme is not sustainable as it entails the amendment of the enabling Act. I so recommend.

The Chairman: Thank you. What I would only want Recommendation (i) to be reworded '*is*' direct the petitioners - retired Police officers of Nigeria to forward all relevant documents on this matter and leave the word '*issue*' out. This is because it does not have a place in it. Again, the word *direct* should be replaced with '*Urge*'

Recommendation (i) - (Urge the Retired Police Officers of Nigeria to forward all relevant documents on the matter to PENCOR for verification and possible rectification of the said underpayment of their 50 per cent lump sum retirements benefits, if any) – agreed to.

The Chairman: On recommendation (ii), the word *direct* should be replaced with *Urge*.

Recommendation (ii) - (Urge the House to discountenance the Petitioners' request to migrate from the present contributory Pension Scheme is not sustainable since it entails the amendment of the Enabling Act) – *as amended agreed to.*

Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Asimiyu Sikiru against the Nigeria Police Force – CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE.

The Chairman: The next Report to be considered is a Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Asimiyu Sikiru against the Nigeria Police Force. I now invite Hon Abonta to speak on this Report.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is also a very pathetic petition. The Petitioner, a former Police Warden was employed, suddenly got blind and sick and miraculously regains his health and has spent several years out of Police and now brought the petition seeking and asking for re-engagement into the Police Force.

Looking at the whole matter, we are in doubt if he will be able to do rigorous job since he had already being disengaged and paid all his entitlements and benefits before he miraculously regain his sight. Also, Police on his own said he will not be able to engage him back, but another clause is that after his dis-engagement his name still appears on the Police papers.

The Committee recommends to; 'urge the House to advice the Petitioner to apply to the Police Service Commission to process his retirement benefits.

To mandate the House Committee on Police Affairs to conduct an investigation into the activities of the Nigeria Police Force, especially on the allegation of the Petitioner that years after retirement his name still appeared on the promotion list.

The Chairman: Thank you. This Report has one recommendation broke into two.

Question put and agreed to.

Recommendation (i) - (Urge the House to advice the Petitioner to apply to the Police Service Commission to process his retirement's benefits) – *agreed to.*

Recommendation (ii) - (Mandate the Committee on Police Affairs to conduct an investigation into the activities of the Nigeria Police Force, especially on

the allegation of the Petitioner that years after retirement his name still appeared on the promotion list) - *agreed to.*

Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr. Mathew Mohammed against the Federal Road Safety Commission on alleged wrongful dismissal from service – CONSIDERED IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.

The Chairman: The next Report to be considered is a Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr. Mathew Mohammed against the Federal Road Safety Commission on alleged wrongful dismissal from service. I now invite the Chairman on Public Petitions to speak on this Report.

Hon. Nkem-Abonta Uzoma: Thank you, chairman. This is a Petition the House needs to look at because a lot of it exists arising from the obnoxious Decree 1984. This Decree enables Directors of Ministries to rationalise persons for reasons best known to them without disclosing that. He was to rationalise its accountability and probity and also enables Directors of Ministries to ostracize persons for reasons best known to them without disclosing them.

It happened that he was ostracized with no proper reason and the people could not give any satisfactory reason why he was taken out. They said they needed him; they made no case. He made the case upon his promotion and service etcetera and there is no reason, because he has not been queried for anything at all and he was rationalized and then he left the service.

After a careful consideration of all the facts - evidences and circumstances, the Committee found that Federal Road Safety failed to establish reasonable ground why his employment was terminated other than the Decree No. 17 of 1984 which also affected other officers but were later recalled. That the Federal Road Safety was biased; they did not give any description on why it was so, apart from Decree No. 17 of 1984. Our recommendations go as thus in view of everything:

That the Committee urges the House to direct the Management of the Federal Road Safety (FRSC) to recall Mr. Mathew Mohammed back to his job; and also to promote him to current level his mates presently enjoy, but we made no order as to payment of arrears and allowances; that the payments should continue from the day he is being reinstalled.

The Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we go to the recommendations, I want you to throw more light on this issue of Decree No. 17 as regards others. As you see in this instance, I know that officers can be retired when it comes to the issue of public interest.

Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta: Public interest Mr. Chair is defined as a situation whereby a Director wakes up select 20 persons and say based on Decree so, so, you are retired. The Decree says; if you have query, or you have been coming late; if you have something in your file, if there is a record that they needs for you to be laid-off, they will go to that record. But in this case, he has no queries and has a clean record.

Twenty (20) of them got ostracized, they also called for the files of those ones and they had dented files, yet they recalled them. He has a clean file and has no problem. The officers that came said they have no other reason but for that Decree. This Decree is not a blanket one. You must see why, but they have nothing to show against him other than this Decree; there was no defence at all.

We also looked at it and found out that it was improper to say pay him arrears etcetera on the period he did not work. So, we said, restore him and put him at the place where his colleagues are peradventure, he should not be now complementing contemporaries because of laying-off. Promote him where his contemporaries are and begin to pay him on assumption of duty and this is what I think they will comply with to ensure that it takes effect immediately.

The Chairman: The only thing with the recommendation is that we have to replace the word: 'direct' with 'urge'.

Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta: I appreciate the use of the words 'urge' and 'direct'. In our recommendation we seem to be interplaying with some of them actually deliberately if at all legally. If it is a resolution of the House, and urging; if we direct, it is somehow stronger and the word urge is not parliamentary or otherwise, but both are also parliamentary; to urge him to look at and when you urge him to look at; and I think that the House got the inherent power to direct to do a thing and also has enabling power to say urge.

If you urge them, it means there is a time frame for it, but if you direct, it should be specific assignment and order. So, we are asking that the word 'direct' be used so that they will understand it that failure to, will amount to disobedience

completely. When you say urge, they could take their time subject to convenience to other issues, and that is why we arrive at that word.

The Chairman: You want to use another word, I still maintain that if you want the thing to be acted upon immediately, you should have put a time frame while recommending. The word *urge* is more parliamentary than the word *direct*; so the word *direct* should be replaced by *urge*.

Recommendation (i) – (Urge the Management of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) to recall Mr Matthew Mohammed to the job) – agreed to.

Recommendation (ii) - (Promote him to the current level his mates are on without payment of arrears of salaries and allowances) -

Amendment proposed.

Hon. Ekpoatai Owoidighe Ime (Eket/Onna/Esit-Eket/Ibendo): Mr. Speaker, looking at recommendation (ii), I am looking at the Report of Chairman of the Committee, using the word obnoxious secretary. The man did not stay away from the work by himself. He was asked to go home, so if he is being promoted and they did not see any dent, the word: 'without' should be deleted and put 'promote' him to the current level his mate presently enjoy with payment of arrears and salaries.

Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta: Why that will not be very possible and feasible remains. The action of the Federal Road Safety Service is not illegal by virtue of that Decree, that decree enables them to, so, he was not totally speaking illegally taken away from duties, but somebody applied that.

Secondly, if you purposely do that, you will be getting more than one thousand of these cases. If that be the case, you are going to get names; or if you do that too, you will open a flood-gate and you will see people who will come and ask of it.

Thirdly, what is the budgetary provision for these backlog and more are going to come. So, we looked at all these and say well restore him, promote him where his Colleagues are; peradventure, he was a Sergeant then, and say he will be in the service as a Sectoral Command; he said no. We used a human face, put at par and begin to pay him from the date he assumed duty because we cannot pay for the period he did not work. Why did he not challenge this thing then? It is because it was a military era. This is just

what is due to him. Let us not give him what is more than his due.

The Chairman: If you ask the man to be promoted and start to enjoy what his mates are enjoying, you have made his record of service continuous; the man resort to legal battle and said since I have been promoted to be where I am supposed to be, that means my record of service has not been broken, I am entitled to that and that is the legal angle.

Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta: To benefit from there is to enhance his retirement, if we say all right, take him back as a Sergeant, pay him arrears he will retire as a Sergeant. So, let him be where his colleagues are now. I do not know where they will put him. If it is Road Marshall they enhanced his retirement it begins from there. Our fear, he is going to get, ₦200,000 to ₦300,000 of this, some people are also waiting by who were ostracize by this Decree, they will come. It was just an obnoxious Decree that have no defence whatsoever. The Director may not like your face, he may have an issue with you in the office, and you may be competing with one, jointly for this or that.

The Chairman: What if you reword that recommendation; ask the man to be promoted to where his mates are now, and retire him so that he can enjoy gratuity and pension. That will be all right and it might have covered it all. What is the legal angle?

Hon. Pwajok, what is the legal angle because this one has legal implication?

Hon. Edward Gyang Pwajok: We are acting in the interest of justice and fairness because we are acting for the Nigerian people.

We are moving in line with the findings of the Committee. They have found that there was no justification for the action taken in the first place. They have also found that some people have been called. Now, it is because of that he is saying there is biased, why was he not also recalled?

So, the only thing that we have to do is either to also recall him which they have done, and they have said there is also need for him to be promoted on the same rank like his colleagues.

And like Hon. Ekpoatai said, the justice of the case demands that if he is put at par with his colleagues, then he should enjoy the same benefits with them. On the issue of whether it will open the

floodgate, is where there is justice. We should discourage government, committees, commissions or ministries from doing injustice because if you do injustice you pay a very heavy penalty. So, if it opens the floodgate that is why we are here. Nigerians will say yes, government is also now alive to its responsibility. This is because nobody should be short-changed on the grounds that well let us just forget about this thing, it has happened. What suffering has this man and his family undergone all these years because of that obnoxious Decree? Have we talked about the psychological trauma that he has faced?

Therefore, this amendment is in order.

The Chairman: If the amendment is in order, what Hon. Ekpoatai is saying is promote him to the current level his mates presently enjoyed with payment of arrears of salaries.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed: I second the amendment as moved by Hon. Ekpoatai.

Amendment put and agreed to.

Recommendation (ii) – (Promote him to the current level his mates presently enjoy with payment of arrears of salaries) – as amended, agreed to

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: I move that the House do revert to Plenary to report progress.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed: I second the Motion as moved by Hon. Hembe.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do revert to Plenary.

(The Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair)

The Deputy Speaker: The House in the Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Iduemre Ochuko against the University of Benin on alleged wrongful termination of appointment and approved the only Recommendation of the Report.

The House in the Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Women Arise for Change Initiative on behalf of the family of Mr Godwin Udoh against the Nigerian Police Force; and approved Recommendations (i) to (iv) of the Report.

The House in the Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Retired Police Officers against the National Pension Commission and approve and; approved Recommendations (i) and (ii) of the Report.

The House also in the Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Asimiyu Sikiru against the Nigeria Police Force seeking reinstatement into the Service; and approved Recommendations (i) and (ii) of the Report.

The House in the Committee of the Whole considered the Report of the House Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Mr. Mathew Mohammed against the Federal Road Safety Commission on alleged wrongful dismissal from service; and approved Recommendation (i) and; Recommendation (ii) as amended.

Adoption of Report

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: I move that the House do adopt the Reports as considered in the

Committee of the Whole.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed: I second the Motion as moved by the acting Leader of the House.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do adopt and approve the Report of the Committee of the Whole.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Iorwase Herman C. Hembe: Hon. Speaker, I move that the House do adjourn Plenary till tomorrow, Thursday, 16th June, 2016 at 11.00 a.m.

Hon. Nasiru Ali Ahmed: I second the Motion ably moved by the Acting Leader.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do stand adjourned till Thursday, 16th June, 2016 at 11.00 a.m.

The House adjourned accordingly at 3.56 p.m.