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**SENATE OF THE FEDERAL
REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

Wednesday 2nd March, 2016

The Senate met at 10:44 a.m.

PRAYERS

(The President in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The President: Distinguished Colleagues, we have before us the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 1st March, 2016 for approval. We will start consideration from page 515 to 523.

Senator Mustapha Bukar (Katsina North): Mr. President, I move the Motion that the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 1st March, 2016 be approved.

Senator Gershom Bassey (Cross River South): Mr. President, I second the Motion that the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 1st March, 2016 be approved.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 1st March, 2016 be approved.

OATHS

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

AND

OATH OF MEMBERSHIP

The President: Will any Senator desirous of taking the Oaths please come to the Table?

Thereupon, the following Senators took and subscribed the Oaths required by law.

- (1) Senator-Elect David Bonaventure Alechenu Mark (Benue South)
- (2) Senator-Elect Ahmed Salau Ogembe (Kogi Central)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Visitors at the Gallery

I wish to acknowledge the presence of staff and students of JIP Heritage Academy, Jikwoyi, Abuja and staff and students of Gifted and Talented Academy, Mararaba, Nasarawa State who are in the Gallery to observe the Senate Proceedings.

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(Visitors stood for recognition)

I wish you all a fruitful observation of the Senate Proceedings.

Please sit down.

Members of the Conference Committee of MTEF

I want to announce the members of the Conference Committee of the MTEF as follows:

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------------------|---|----------|
| (1) | Senator John Enoch | - | Chairman |
| (2) | Senator Rafiu Ibrahim | - | Member |
| (3) | Senator Umaru Kurfi | - | Member |
| (4) | Senator Adeola Solomon- | | Member |
| (5) | Senator Andy Uba | - | Member |
| (6) | Senator Yusuf Abubakar Yusuf- | | Member |

The Committee members are to meet today, and please send in your Report by tomorrow as we are already behind on the Conference Committee of the MTEF.

Wedding Invitation

Senator Isah Hamman Misau cordially invites distinguished Senators to attend the Wedding Ceremony of Kabiru Hamman Misau and Samira Tukur Bashir on the 5th of March, 2016.

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Venue: Galadima Gwandu's residence, Galadima Bashir Road, Birni Kebbi, Kebbi State.

Kabir Hamman Misau, the groom, is a brother to Senator Isah Hamman Misau.

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC PETITIONS

Petition on Incessant Killings in some Communities in Taraba State

Senator Emmanuel Bwacha (Taraba South): Mr. President, I am rising under Order 41 and 43. With your permission, I will read.

- 41(1) *A petition may only be presented to the Senate by a Senator, who shall affix his name at the beginning thereof.*
- 43 *By the indulgence of the Senate and the leave of the President of the Senate, a Senator may make a Personal Explanation although there be no question before the Senate; but no controversial matter may be brought forward nor may debate arise upon the Explanation. The terms of the proposed statement shall be submitted in detail to the President of the Senate when his leave to make it is sought.*

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I have a petition written by some communities in Taraba State over incessant killings that has been going on silently unknown to Nigerians. I also refer to Order 43 to make reference to the matter I raised earlier on in this Chamber. Shortly after I raised that matter in respect of lives and properties, a week later, the mother of the Deputy Governor of the State was kidnapped and ransom required. What led to her release is history but this kidnapping is going on, on a daily basis in the State as I speak. The State of Taraba is under siege by insurgents glaringly and evidently from the war theatre, like I earlier on said, in Borno and Yobe States.

This petition is in respect of some communities that had been undergoing this killings and the curious dimension of this is the letters we have intercepted recently. In several public pronouncements, the Inspector-General of Police has mentioned that the herdsmen that we see are not the herdsmen that we know. The Fulani herdsmen that we know are not the ones that are operating now.

The President: Is the petition seeking any judicial remedy?

Senator Emmanuel Bwacha: No.

The President: All right, come and lay the petition.

Senator Emmanuel Bwacha: I still have a personal explanation which I want to make.

The President: Lay the petition and thereafter you will make your personal explanation

(Petition laid.)

Petition against First Bank of Nigeria Plc

Senator Dino Melaye (Kogi West): Mr. President, I have a petition from Tony Joe Ikpeme petitioned against First Bank of Nigeria Plc. The petition is on extra-judicial termination of Mr. Tony Joe Ikpeme by First Bank of Nigeria Plc.

No judicial remedy has been sought.

(Petition laid.)

Petition against the Soldiers of 82 Division of Nigerian Army

Senator Gilbert Nnaji (Enugu North): Mr. President, I have a petition from Owoh Community which they route through their Council, Igwenagu O. Ngene and Associates.

The petition reads Save our Souls before it is too late, re-unwarranted invasion, displacement, threatening of ejection of Mbo-Owoh Community in Nkanu East Senatorial District of Enugu State by the soldiers of 82 Division of Nigerian Army.

The soldiers of Nigerian Army invaded the community on the 3rd November, 2015 and started marking their buildings and ask them to vacate their ancestral homes.

They reported the matter to the State Government and the Nigerian Army was invited for discussion. The meeting was held on the 21st December, 2015 and 14th January, 2016 but unfortunately, the Nigerian Army did not show up.

Therefore, they are asking this Senate to look into this matter and intervene and call on the Military High Command to send their soldiers back to their barracks. I have called the lawyer and the traditional rulers and they said that they did not go to court or any other place.

(Petition laid.)

Petition against Nigerian Army for Unlawful Invasion and Incessant Killings in Ogoni Land

Senator Gershom Bassey (Cross River South): Mr. President, It is a petition against the Nigerian Army for unlawful invasion and incessant killings in Ogoni Land.

The President: All right, come and lay the petition.

(Petition laid.)

Petitions against the Nigerian Army for Invasion and Non-Payment of Gratuity

Senator Ben Murray Bruce (Bayelsa East): Mr. President, I have two petitions.

The first petition is from the movement for the survival of Ogoni people against Nigerian Army for invasion where 18 people were killed.

The second petition is war affected Pioneer Cadet Officers of the Nigerian Air Force; they are people who fought for Biafra but enrolled in the Nigerian Army. They have been forgiven and gazetted but the gratuity has not been paid since 1970.

(Petitions laid.)

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Petition against Niger Delta Power Holding Company

Senator Muhammad Hassan (Yobe South): Mr. President, I have a petition from one of my Constituents by name Sani Abbakura. He was a staff of Niger Delta Power Holding Company. Niger Delta Power Holding Company has staff strength of over 500 and not more than three are indigenes of Yobe State. Now, one of the three who has served in the Public Service for 20 years with unblemished record has been sacked. His ordeal started in the last two to three years when he headed a Procurement Committee in which his Committee recommended a contract of ₦24 Million but the Managing Director has interest in another company and he insisted that the contract must be given to another company for ₦440 Million.

(Petitions laid.)

Petition against National Insurance Commission

Senator Clifford A. M. Ordia (Edo Central): Mr. President, I have two petitions, one is a petition by Mr. Akingbabe Akinneye against National Insurance Commission over unlawful termination of appointment.

Petition against NNPC

The second one is a petition by G. CAPPALC against NNPC for refusal to honour their financial claim over the building and handing over of Block B and C of NNPC Towers.

(Petitions laid.)

(Petitions accordingly referred to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions to report back in two weeks)

PRESENTATION OF A REPORT

Report on the Ban on Nigerian Agricultural Products by the European Union

Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume (Borno South): Mr. President, the first Business of the Day is the presentation of a Report of the Joint Committee on Health and Agriculture and Rural Development in respect of a Motion on the Ban on Nigerian Agricultural Products by the European Union.

You may wish to invite Senator Olanrewaju Tejuoso, Chairman of the Committee to move a Motion for the Senate to receive the Report.

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Senator Olanrewaju Tejuoso (Ogun Central): Mr. President, I move the Motion that the Senate do receive the Report of the Joint Committee on Health and Agriculture and Rural Development in respect of the Motion on the Ban on Nigerian Agricultural Products by the European Union.

Senator Nelson Asuquo Effiong (Akwa Ibom South): Mr. President, I second the Motion as moved by the Chairman.

Question put and agreed to.

(Report laid on the Table.)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTIONS

Need for Patronisation of made in Nigeria Goods

Senator Mohammed Ali Ndume: Mr. President, the first Order of the Day is a Motion standing in the name of Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe on the need for patronisation of made in Nigeria Goods in Nigeria.

You may wish to invite Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe to move the Motion.

Senator Enyinnaya Harcourt Abaribe (Abia South): Mr. President, the Motion is on the need to patronise made in Nigeria Goods.

The Senate:

Recalls that in 1960s up to the early 70s and 80s, the Nigerian Economy ran on *made in Nigeria* exports. Industries were located in the rural areas and made in Nigeria products were popular with Nigerians and many other African countries. The Nigerian economy at that time had a comfortable balance of deficit. The level of industries shutting down was less than 10 *per cent* and Nigeria produced what they consumed. Now due to lack of patronage and very harsh business environment has forced over 80 *per cent* of our industries to close shop;

Notes that government played an active part in this era by putting in place relevant policies and agencies including the Marketing Boards and other initiatives targeted at creating markets for local production and enterprise;

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Regrets that today, Nigeria consumes what it does not produce. Investment in real sector has given way to trading in foreign and imported goods and the resultant impact has been a negative balance of trade and shutting down of Textile companies, batteries, tobacco industries, wood processing factories, Cocoa and Palm Oil farms and other factories that had been the bane of the Nigerian Economy;

Recalls that at 1990, Nigeria had over 170 developed textile industries employing between 2,000 and 10,000 workers each; but today, only about 12 are still functioning, the resultant loss of opportunities and employments is anyone's guess.

Aware that government spends billions of Naira yearly to purchase imported vehicles, furniture, textile, printing papers and even consumables such as rice, drugs, vegetable oils, fruit juice, *et cetera*. In the second quarter of 2015 alone, Nigeria spent ₦42.4 billion importing wheat and meslin and spent ₦25.3 billion in importation of rice;

Aware that the current depletion in Forex earnings and forex available is a symptomatic effect of an import dependent economy which is riddled with unemployment, negative balance of trade, low capital formation, low private sector development;

Recognises that sensitising Nigerians to consume *made in Nigeria* products, without more is not quite enough and that the government needs to put policies in place to aid and encourage local producers;

Aware that governments elsewhere have developed and adopted varying measures of First Option Policy for their locally manufactured goods in their various countries. In countries like China, the Chinese Procurement Act makes it mandatory to source for and buy made in China products for any government funded agency. In India, the obligation to procure Indian manufactured goods is mandatory for all agencies of government. In the USA, buy made in America was not just policy but a legislative mandate and most agencies of the American government still adopt that policy till date. In South Africa, there is a policy geared towards locally manufactured goods especially on black empowerment;

Notes that these countries did not place condition of standardisation on their industries before the government's acceptance of their products, but rather encouraged local producers and their financiers by placing the condition of acceptability first, and then ensured standardisation as they continued;

Observes that unless and until Nigeria adopts a pro-made in Nigeria procurement policy and law, *made in Nigeria* products will continue to lag behind both in competition and acceptability, and economic indicators have confirmed that unless we produce what we consume, the Nigeria economy will be worse off for it;

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Convinced that if government puts measures in place to ensure obligatory official patronage of locally made products for all agencies of government and all offices funded by public funds, local producers and investors will have the incentives to invest quantitatively and qualitatively in this country because of the certainty of the market demands, the relevant agencies will ensure standardisation of made in Nigeria products and Nigerians will gradually have a paradigm shift on their purchase of foreign products, and the Nigerian economy will reap from the outcome, which is wealth and job creation for our teeming population;

Accordingly resolves to:

- (i) Urge the Federal government to initiate and implement the First Option Policy on purchase of locally manufactured products for any government procurement in all arms of government and every public funded organisation;
- (ii) Urge the Senate and the House of Representatives to amend the Procurement Act to ensure that as a matter of law, agencies of government and government funded institutions adopt the made in Nigeria goods First Option Policy and where consideration is first given to the local industry before any other.

In rounding off, let me assert that I am wearing *made in Nigeria* goods, made in Nigeria sandals; the only thing that I wear that is not made in Nigeria is my watch and we are going into that in Aba very soon.

I so submit.

Senator James Manager (Delta South): Mr. President, I second this self-explanatory, direct to the point Motion ably moved by my colleague.

Unlike the Mover of the Motion, if you look at me very closely you will see that everything on me is made in Nigeria including my cap.

This all-important Motion is one that we need more than ever before to boost the local economy. Now that we are finding solutions to what is happening in the economy today, this Motion is very timely. If we concentrate on made in Nigerian goods, if we consume them and encourage the people who are into it like the Aba people and of course, the man who is representing Aba is the Mover of this Motion and his name is also Abaribe.

If you go to certain parts of this country, particularly the South East, I am a Deltan but I am proud of the South Eastern people because in certain parts of South East, everything including the waste materials are not wasted. They can turn waste materials into something else.

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In a country like Nigeria where the exchange rate today fluctuates, it is either ₦320 or ₦315 to a dollar, if what is embedded in this Motion is applied *stricto sensu* and it goes down, of course, it will boost the local economy and we can even export some of the things that are made in this country abroad and it will also make our currency in this country to be very strong.

What is needed at this point is not grammar, it is about putting whatever we are saying into practice. We have to practise what we are saying so that the local economy will boom. It is not just about the Federal Government, it includes the States and Local Governments. If there is deliberate and aggressive massive encouragement given to those who are producing consumable items in this country, definitely, by the grace of God, Nigeria will be taken from the level it is to the next level.

Senator Sam Egwu (Ebonyi North): Mr. President, I want to support this very important Motion moved by Senator Abaribe. If we put into practice what we preach, the whole country will know we are serious. Looking at the budget presented this year, if 50 *per cent* of all procurements contained therein is implemented using made in Nigeria goods, this economy we are talking about will revive immediately. Let us live by example.

I will therefore suggest that this Senate starts by making sure that even the cars we are going to procure are all made in Nigeria cars. Once we do that, all other Arms of government, the Executive and the Judiciary, will also buy made in Nigeria cars. That is what I am proposing and I am supporting it, my Colleagues also should support this. Let us start from ourselves.

Senator Ben Murray Bruce (Bayelsa East): Mr President, I just want to say that poverty is a very good thing. What is happening to Nigeria is important because unless you are broke, face bankruptcy, miserable, you will not appreciate what you have; so, poverty is a good thing. Devaluation is a good thing and that is what we need and that is what we have, it makes us think. Creative people usually come from very poor homes; creative people are not wealthy people and what we have right now is very important.

But let me say this; the Senate is leading the fight. A lot of you do not know that the Senate President and the Deputy Senate President have already purchased made in Nigeria cars. They are patriotic, they purchased made in Nigeria cars and even Senator Dino has purchased a made in Nigeria car. (*Laughter*)

Everybody laughed at this statement but it is important and symbolic. If you look at the whole government today, the Senate is leading the fight to buy Nigeria goods in Naira. We are leading this fight and that is the truth. People laugh at it but why would you laugh at a made in Nigeria product in the first place?

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If you have 50 cars, one of them should be made in Nigeria. Charity begins at home; it does not have to be only car. We all travel across the country, when I travel to Port Harcourt and to Katsina. I am not going to move my car to Katsina and what I have is one car. If we eat NASCO cornflakes in the morning and we have multiple homes, it is one step.

When I worked with General Obasanjo 15 years ago, he banned importation of orange juice into Nigeria. Immediately he banned importation of orange juice, CHIVITA took over. The price went from ₦150 to ₦250 but they became a major supplier of orange juice in Nigeria. Today, it is a very successful company. Even when people make fun of government who banned tooth picks, you laughed at it but it is symbolic and it is important. If you ban tooth picks and tooth picks are made in Nigeria that is a ₦10 Billion industry.

Although we laugh at little things but those little things become big thing. If the Senate President who has already purchased a made in Nigeria car drives it one day in the 365 days in a year and people see him and they wave at him, it is symbolic. It will make a big difference because people will say, if the Senate President can drive a made in Nigeria car, maybe I should buy one too. If the Senate President or the Deputy President can fly Arik Air to London, it is symbolic and it is important.

It is very important that we consume what we produce and we produce what we consume. We can talk about this for ever but the point is, we are on the right part. Let me say to the millions of people watching this debate at home, the Senate is taking the lead; the Senate is leading by example; I am confident about the leadership of the Senate; the two political parties speak with one voice and I am sure the poverty that befalls Nigeria is a blessing in disguise.

Senator Bukar Abba Ibrahim (Yobe East): Mr. President, I am in total support of this Motion. My Colleagues have said so many things about made in Nigeria goods and I do not believe that made in Nigeria goods are in any way inferior to products from other countries. People talked about Aba and there are even much more fundamental industries producing made in Nigeria goods which have been neglected and allowed to die.

When in the late 70's and early 80's, the Oshogbo Steel Rolling Mill and Katsina Steel Mill were established, we the young people at that time were very excited. That was the beginning of industrialisation in Nigeria and the beginning of made in Nigeria cars, tractors and so on. Not long after the STYRS of Nigeria, the British Leyland companies established Assembly plants and we said we are realising our dreams. One after the other, several of these industries was established and thereafter, I became a Commissioner.

I remember in one of our Exco meetings when we wanted to buy tractors, in Bauchi which is in the North East, we were in Borno then, Kebbi State had not been created, some of my colleagues went for exported tractors and few of us went for the Nigeria assembled tractors. They said that those tractors were only Nigerian assembled they were not Nigerian products, but that is the beginning of industrialisation. You cannot start producing a tractor just like that overnight. Those companies were assembling them; the whole idea of assembling it is to get patronage and they will eventually establish the industries and then we will gradually take over.

All those companies in Kano, Lagos, Ibadan, and Bauchi disappeared one after the other for lack of patronage and that is why Senator Ben Bruce idea is very important. We must lead by example, we must patronise made in Nigeria goods. Even if a company establish an element of made in Nigeria aspect, we should grab it and then try to take over the others gradually, we cannot industrialise overnight.

Today, we do not have the British Leyland assembling plant in Nigeria, vehicles are all imported. The Steel Rolling Mills had disappeared. When they said that 99 *per cent* of Ajaokuta Steel Company was completed when Gowon was the Head of State, up till today, Ajaokuta Steel has not been completed and that company would have been the beginning of our industrialisation. The issue of other people struggling to establish and produce small things to make it made in Nigeria is a very good effort, but these issues I have just mentioned are fundamental. Aba would have been depending on Ajaokuta, Katsina Steel Rolling Mills and so on but there are industries in Aba which are benefitting the whole of Nigeria.

Senator Ben Bruce said that Senator Dino has bought made in Nigeria car, I do not know the kind of car Senator Dino rides but people tell me about cars which are not even made in Europe but it is made somewhere else in the outer world and then he said he is riding made in Nigeria cars. Let us start doing it ourselves. We can show the example when we come to the Senate on the 8th or 10th March wearing made in Nigeria dresses. It is very easy. They are available. We can do it. The struggle and fight for made in Nigeria goods can start with us and our families.

Senator Ibrahim Abdullahi Gobir (Sokoto East): Mr. President, first I would like to correct an impression. As an engineer, I know that today that less than five *per cent* of all the items required for the production of cars can be produced in Nigeria while 95 *per cent* are produced outside the country, so, the issue of made in Nigeria car does not exist but cars can be assembled in Nigeria, you have to understand that.

Secondly, we have to look at the issue generally. Actually, it is policy summersault of the government that is killing the manufacture of cars, production of rice, wheat, and other things that we can do to be self-sufficient in this country. As long as the policy summersault exists, then there is no way that we can be able to solve this problem. Last year and also at the beginning of this year, we debated on rice and wheat importation whereby we discovered that we are supposed to be self-sufficient in the production of rice, but today, Nigeria stands to be the largest importer of rice and then the third largest importer of wheat in the world. That is the issue of policy summersault whereby we discovered that about ~~N~~465 Billion waivers was given. These are some issues that we have to be very serious about.

If we must succeed in the country, the government must apply the import substitution mechanism and it has to be done with waiver. We have to start immediately to substitute those items that we believe are important and they cannot be imported. If we go ahead and do that, you will see how far we can move and then from there, we can be able to have the foreign exchange and the required items.

The issue of PAN is another thing in the history that we have to look at. When PAN was first brought in here to assemble cars, in fact, in ten years, we would have been producing cars but today PAN is almost gone. It is something that we have to be very serious about. I am very glad today that Senate is taking the lead in buying Nigerian products. There is somebody whose name is Pastor William Otoke with the Federal Ministry of Industry and he has been doing quite a lot as a Promotion Manager. He came to me several times and we discussed but since 2009 till now, his name has never been known simply because he has been singing the song that many people do not want to know. So, we have to fight hard to make sure that, yes, buying Nigeria made actually works and it is acceptable to Nigerians.

Senator Dino Melaye (Kogi West): Mr. President, I want to celebrate the made in Nigeria Senator, Senator Abaribe for bringing this very important Motion.

In considering made in Nigeria goods, we must look at the enabling factors that will necessitate the production of made in Nigeria goods. It is beyond lip service, it is beyond having one made in Nigeria attire and you have over 70 *Sanford Great Britain* suits in your wardrobe. We must reduce the agitation for made in Nigeria goods and services to the basics.

What are those factors militating against the production of these goods? We must tackle them. We must also begin to look at our legislation, and then we will begin to talk about made in Nigeria goods.

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We will also move in order to encourage the production of made in Nigeria products in Nigeria and begin to talk about made in Nigeria women, with due apology to my uncle, I am talking of the Governor of Edo State. We must as a people stop paying dowries in dollars and pounds. It is time for my Colleagues here to become born again and start patronising made in Nigeria women.

The President: Distinguished Colleagues, let us go to Prayers:

- (1) *Urge the Federal government to initiate and implement the First Option Policy on purchase of locally manufactured products for any government procurement in all arms of government and every public funded organisation –*

Question put and agreed to.

- (2) *Urge the Senate and the House of Representatives to amend the Procurement Act to ensure that as a matter of law, agencies of government and government funded institutions adopt the made-in-Nigeria goods as First Option Policy and consideration is first given to the local industry before any others –*

Question put and agreed to.

The President: Is there any additional prayer?

Senator Barnabas A. I. Gemade (Benue North-East): Mr. President, my additional prayer is, *urge the Ministry of Trade and Investment to publish periodic records on import data to facilitate a proper programme of import substitution that can be implemented locally to ensure reduction in import of commodities.*

The President: Is there any seconder? (No response). Is there any other additional prayers?

Senator Barau I. Jibrin (Kano North): Mr. President, my the additional prayer will read thus: *the relevant Government Agencies should ensure that Nigeria should no longer be a dumping ground for sub-standard goods from other parts of the world, as the importation of sub-standard goods in our markets tend to make the made Nigeria goods less competitive.*

The President: Is there any seconder? (No response)

Senator Theodore Ahamefule Orji (Abia Central): Mr. President, I want to propose that *the Federal Government should still endeavour to provide a very good enabling environment for industries to thrive and to consider the issue of giving bailer funds to some of these industries that manufacture local products in order to curtail unemployment.*

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The President: Is there any seconder to that?

Senator Adeola Solomon Olamilekan (Lagos West): Mr. President, I second the Motion as moved by Senator Barau I. Jibrin that *all Agencies should ensure that Nigeria no longer be a dumping ground for sub-standard goods imported from other parts of the world.*

Question put and Negatived.

Senator Joseph U. Chukwuka (Enugu North): Mr. President, I second the Motion as moved by Senator Theodore Ahamefule Orji that *local industries that are producing made in Nigeria products should be given tax holidays and incentives so that they will continue producing and have a better opportunity of products produced in this country than what is imported from outside.*

Question put and Negatived.

Senator Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi (Niger North): Mr. President, I want to move for additional prayer as follows:

Urge the Federal Government to re-design and strengthen Science, Technical Engineering and Mathematical Education with emphasis on Technical Skills align to industrialisation.

Senator Abubakar Kyari (Borno North): Mr. President, I second the Motion moved by Senator Aliyu Sabi.

Question put and Negatived.

Resolved: That the Senate do:

- (i) Urge the Federal government to initiate and implement the First Option Policy on purchase of locally manufactured products for any government procurement in all arms of government and every public funded organisation.
- (ii) Urge the Senate and the House of Representatives to amend the Procurement Act to ensure that as a matter of law, agencies of government and government funded institutions adopt the made-in-Nigeria goods as First Option Policy and consideration is first given to the local industry before any others.

The President: Distinguished Colleagues, I want to thank Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe for this very important and timely Motion. I use this opportunity to commend him because I had the opportunity to attend the made in Aba Exhibition which he has been doing, using the Zonal Intervention Funds.

It was very good because as you all know, there is a wrong misconception sometimes of this Zonal Intervention Funds of the National Assembly. The perception sometimes is that this money was used for any good course and it was very commendable to see that for years this money has been used to support the Trade Fair.

I believe that the major issue today is the issue of job creation and we cannot do it without looking for ways by which we can stimulate our own economy. The Motion talked about different laws that had been passed. As legislators, the small steps we have taken by our own personal commitment towards it are good, but our largest responsibility is legislation.

Our responsibility is to make a difference in legislation and that is the two prayers that we have passed. I hope that the relevant Committees will look into the issue of the procurement law because if you look at the Budget of Government where we are planning to spend close to ₦5 Trillion between Federal Government and all the Parastatals, if that alone is going towards local industries, it will make a great deal. If we can amend that law and do our oversight functions very well, it will make a difference to this great country, so I want to commend Senator Enyinnaya Abaribe. I hope very soon, the relevant Committees will come up with an amendment that we can pass and ensure that the 2016 Budget is the first option to locally produced goods and I think that would go a long way. As Senator Abaribe said, even the countries that we follow in democracy, the United States as way back as 1933 President Franklin Roosevelt signed this kind of Bill into law; it has been the practice and it has worked. I am sure this 8th National Assembly can do the same to make it work.

I thank you for your contributions. We will continue to do our own bit personally but the major issue is the law and the oversight.

Thank you so much.

Non-Payment of Allowances to Nigerian Students Studying Abroad

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, the second Order of the Day is a Motion standing in the name of distinguished Senator David Umaru on the non-payment of allowances to Nigerian students studying abroad.

You may wish to invite distinguished Senator David Umaru to move the Motion.

Senator David Umaru (Niger East): Mr. President, this Motion seeks to address the non-payment of allowances to Nigerian students studying abroad. The Motion is being co-sponsored by:

- (1) Senator Aliyu M. Wammako
- (2) Senator Mustapha M. Sanni
- (3) Senator Joshua M. Lidani
- (4) Senator Binta Masi Garba
- (5) Senator Mohammed Ubali Shitu
- (6) Senator Ajayi Boroffice
- (7) Senator Joshua C. Dariye

The Senate,

Notes with dismay the non-payment of allowances to Nigerian students studying abroad based on the Bilateral Education Agreement (BEA) Scholarship Award Scheme in Russia and other forms of Scholarships award in other parts of the world;

Notes that the Bilateral Education Agreement Scholarship Award Scheme which is the largest Federal Government Scholarship Scheme is an agreement entered into between the Federal Government of Nigeria and other countries namely; Russia, China, Ukraine, Cuba, Hungary, Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, *et cetera*, and it is for the purpose of training Nigeria students in various specialised areas of academic pursuits. Consequent upon this arrangement, the Federal Government of Nigeria sent a total of 375 students to Russia and over 400 students to other countries that are parties to the said Bilateral Agreement and other forms of scholarship award scheme;

Further notes that under the Bilateral Education Agreement Scholarship Award Scheme, whilst the host countries takes responsibility for tuition, the Federal Government on its part comes under obligation to cater for the upkeep of such students by providing monthly upkeep allowances of \$500, medical allowance of \$200, winter clothing allowance of \$250, that is in addition to the sum of \$2,000 US per student being provision for flight ticket upon completion of studies;

Aware that the Federal Government has failed, neglected and refused to honour its own part of the bargain, that is to pay for this allowances to our students since 2013, and these students have been left to their faith with no apparent means of livelihood which has resulted in some of the students taking into various criminal activities just to survive;

Observes that because of the failure of the Federal Government of Nigeria to honour this Bilateral Education Agreement Scholarship Award Scheme by failing to pay these allowances, the students have had to endure various forms of hardship which has reached its crescendo in 2015, the result of which are; forceful eviction of Nigerian students from their accommodation due to inability to pay their rents; hardships arising from various forms of ailments due to inability to access medical care; consistent threats of deportation due to lack of funds to renew expired travelling documents; inability to purchase the return ticket by those who have completed their studies, amongst other forms of undignified treatment meted out on them;

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Concerned that despite repeated demands and appeal to the appropriate authorities, such as the Federal Ministry of Education, the Nigerian Embassy in Moscow among others, none of these allowances have been paid to these students by the Federal Government of Nigeria;

Aware that most of the student were awarded the scholarships based on their excellent academic performance and should not be frustrated by the Federal Government of Nigeria and thereby encouraging them to take criminal activities just to earn a living as the laws of the host countries in most instances, particularly Russia, do not permit foreign students to work;

Aware that the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, as amended, particularly Section 14 (2) (b) provides that the security and welfare of Nigerians shall be the Primary purpose of government. It therefore becomes imperative for this administration to uphold the provisions of the Constitution and apply it in the current situation, giving the fact that these students were sent abroad by the Federal Government and ought not to be allowed to suffer unjustly;

The Senate accordingly resolves to:

- (i) Condemn the non-payment of allowances to Nigerian students studying abroad who are beneficiaries of the Bilateral Education Agreement Award Scheme and other forms of scholarship awards granted by the Federal Government.
- (ii) Urge the Federal Government to take immediate step to ensure prompt payment of all outstanding allowances to the 375 students that are beneficiaries of the BEA Scholarship Award and the over 400 other students who are being sponsored in other parts of the world by the Federal Government of Nigeria.
- (iii) Urge the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to consider the possibility of employing a Russian scholarship benefactor graduate at the Nigerian Embassy in Russia as either an *education attaché* or a Liaison officer who will understand the plight of these students and oversee the procurement and payment of the monthly stipends.
- (iv) Mandate the Senate Committee on Education to meet with the Minister of Education and the Chairman of the Federal Scholarship Board in order to proffer a lasting solution to the incidence of non-payment of scholarship to students studying abroad.

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Mr. President, this is a cancer that is eating very deep and destroying the image of this country in addition to the untold hardship that these students have been exposed to.

I therefore, urge this Senate to intervene and save the soul of this future generation.

I so move.

Senator Shehu Sani (Kaduna Central): Mr. President, this is a straightforward Motion, in the sense that it clearly reflects the plight of our students studying in different countries of the world. I have received thousands of call from students who have been stranded, who are said to be given scholarship by Federal, State and even agencies of the government. The best thing we should do here is to move straight to a clear resolution that would factor them in within this budget. Most of our students are there as beggars and destitute; these are people abandoned by their country and that has negative impact on our image as a country. We should simply move to see how we can assist these students to come back.

Senator Godfery U. Chukwuka (Enugu North): Mr. President, I support this very important Motion that is putting Nigeria in bad image outside this country. These students were chosen based on excellence and their performances in exams in the Universities, and Nigerians deem them fit and proper persons to be sent abroad to receive further education that will benefit this country and also themselves. If these people have committed no offence except that they have excelled in their courses of study in the University and they were so chosen, I do not feel that this country will leave them stranded in foreign countries where they do not have relations. I am of the opinion that since the budget is still before us here, that you direct specially the Committee on Tertiary Institutions to look into the scholarship scheme as reflected in the budget of 2016 as it concerns this scholarship scheme and once we do that, we can carry this people and solve their problems.

The President: Thank you. The Motion is straightforward; we will go to the prayers.

- (i) *Condemn the non-payment of allowances to Nigeria students studying abroad who are beneficiaries of the Bilateral Education Agreement Award Scheme and on other forms of scholarship awards, granted by the Federal Government –*

Question put and agreed to.

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- (ii) *Urge the Federal Government to take immediate steps to ensure prompt payment of all outstanding allowances to the 375 students that are beneficiaries of the BEA scholarship award and the over 400 other students who are being sponsored in other parts of the world by the Federal Government of Nigeria –*

Question put and agreed to.

- (iii) *Urge the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to consider the possibility of employing a Russian scholarship benefactor graduate at the Nigerian Embassy in Russia as an “education attaché” who understands the plight of these students and will oversee the procurement and payment of the students’ monthly stipends –*

Question put and negated.

- (iv) *Mandate the Senate Committee on Education to meet with the Minister of Education and the Chairman of the Federal Scholarship Board in order to proffer a lasting solution to the incidence of non-payment of scholarship to students studying abroad –*

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Senate do:

- (i) Condemn the non-payment of allowances to Nigeria students studying abroad who are beneficiaries of the Bilateral Education Agreement Award Scheme and on other forms of scholarship awards, granted by the Federal Government.
- (ii) Urge the Federal Government to take immediate steps to ensure prompt payment of all outstanding allowances to the 375 students that are beneficiaries of the BEA scholarship award and the over 400 other students who are being sponsored in other parts of the world by the Federal Government of Nigeria.
- (iii) Urge the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to consider the possibility of employing a Russian scholarship benefactor graduate at the Nigerian Embassy in Russia as an “education attaché” who understands the plight of these students and will oversee the procurement and payment of the students’ monthly stipends.

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- (iv) Mandate the Senate Committee on Education to meet with the Minister of Education and the Chairman of the Federal Scholarship Board in order to proffer a lasting solution to the incidence of non-payment of scholarship to students studying abroad.

The President: Is there any additional prayer? (No response)

As we all know, the main objective of government is to provide welfare and security for its people and as such, it is very wrong for any government to see students who have been offered scholarship by our government to be suffering abroad. I am happy that we still have not concluded the 2016 budget; the relevant Committees and Appropriation should take note of this and make this a priority to ensure that all these outstanding payments are paid and to ensure going forward and not to fall back into this situation again.

I thank you Senator David Umoru for bringing this very important Motion,

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

Report on the New JAMB Policy on Admission

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, the third Order of the Day is the consideration of the Report of the Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND in respect of the Motion on the New JAMB Policy on Admission.

You may wish to invite Senator Binta Masi Garba to move the Motion for the Senate to consider the Report of the Committee.

Senator Binta Masi Garba (Adamawa North): Mr. President, I wish to move that this Senate do consider the Report of the Committee’s inquiry into the new Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Policy on Admission.

Senator Albert Bassey Akpan (Akwa Ibom North East): Mr. President, I second the Motion ably moved by Senator Binta Garba.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the Senate do consider the Report on the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Policy on Admission.

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Senator Binta Masi Garba: Mr. President, the New JAMB Policy entails that a candidate will make a choice of one university, one Polytechnic and one college of Education and then sit for a computer based test (CBT) to gain admission into any tertiary institution in the Country as against the policy we all know which a candidate who purchase the JAMB admission form will fill it and make first, second and third choice of university.

The advantages of Computer Based Testing (CBT) include:

- Elimination of problem associated with paper transmission;
- Storage of test content eliminates associated risk of theft or accidental loss;
- Encryption of test content through all stages of item development, banking and delivery;
- Secure item authoring and banking tools;
- Availability of end-to-end electronic audit trails showing who assessed what and when;
- Automated form selection and randomisation of items within forms – minimising collusion and copying;
- Innovative item types which are generally less susceptible to copying or memorisation;
- Hope for the disadvantaged Nigerian through CBT (blind, albino, prison inmate, physically challenged), etc.

The Committee held a meeting and deliberated on the terms of reference and resolved to invite all the stakeholders to a meeting.

Introduction:

On Tuesday 17th November, 2015 the Senate adopted Resolution number S/Res/047/10/15 and directed the Committee on Tertiary Institution and Tetfund to inquire into circumstances surrounding the new JAMB policy including all allegations of favouritism and review the power of JAMB vis-a-vis admissions.

Meeting with Stakeholders:

The Committee met with Ministers of Education, the Permanent Secretary, Heads of Department, Registrar of Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), the Executive Secretary of National Commission for Colleges of Education and Directors of National University Commission.

The Ministers informed the Committee that the vacancies available in each tertiary institution, in other words the number of students that the facilities available can admit into a particular institution is the root cause of the challenges confronting students admission into tertiary institutions.

The Hon. Minister equally said that it is not the fault of JAMB neither the fault of the Ministry rather the government needs to find more money for more access to be created in the institutions.

JAMB led by the Registrar informed the Committee that its mandate is primarily to conduct examinations that place suitably qualified candidates into Tertiary Institutions. He stated that in line with its enabling law and approved guidelines; the Board (JAMB) ensures uniform standards in the conduct of matriculation examination and placement of suitably qualified candidates in the Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education, both public and private. The enabling law, Act No.2 of 1978, establishing the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) and the subsequent amendments in Act No. 33 of 1989 and Act No. 4 of 1993 spelt out the functions of the Board among others as:

- (a) The general control of the conduct of matriculation examinations for admissions into all Universities, polytechnics (by whatever name called) and Colleges of Education (by whatever name called) in Nigeria.
- (b) The appointment of examiners, moderators, invigilator, members of subject panels and Committees and other persons with respect to matriculation examinations and any other matter incidental thereto or connected therewith;
- (c) The placement of suitably qualified candidates into tertiary Institutions after having taken into account;
 - (i) The vacancies available in each tertiary institution;
 - (ii) The guidelines approved for each tertiary institution by its proprietor or other competent authority;
 - (iii) The preferences expressed or otherwise indicated by candidates for certain tertiary institutions and courses; and
 - (iv) Such other matters as the Board may be directed by the minister to consider or the Board itself may consider appropriate in the circumstances;
- (d) The collection and dissemination of information on all matters relating to admissions into tertiary institutions or any other matter relevant to the discharge of the functions of the Board; and
- (e) The carrying out of such other activities as are necessary or expedient for the full discharge of all or any of the functions conferred on it under or pursuant to the enabling law.

It is in line with this that the Board conducts Policy meeting on admissions every year under the chairmanship of the Honourable Minister of Education in conjunction with tertiary institutions; and the regulatory agencies, that is, (NUC, NBTE and NCCE) to determine the guidelines and procedure for admission.

On the Resolution Urging the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) to consult widely with Parents Teachers Association (PTA), Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and all other stakeholders in the education sector with a view to coming out with a friendlier holistic, comprehensive and sustainable admission policy.

JAMB submitted that looking at the statistical information generated from applications and admissions over the years, the Board was of the opinion that, there are lots of wastages of carrying capacities especially in Polytechnics, Colleges of Educations and private universities; hence it began consulting stakeholders on how to utilise these vacancies. It took a decision which is the new admission policy (a candidate will make a choice of one university, one Polytechnic and one college of Education and then sit for a computer based test) and presented same to the Governing Board made up of representatives of All Nigerian Conference of Principals of Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS), National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), National Universities Commission (NUC), Provosts of Colleges of Education, Rectors of Polytechnics, Vice Chancellors of universities, three (3) government nominees, Federal Ministry of Education and other critical stakeholders' group for thorough discussions, thereafter, it was taken to the Policy Committee meeting.

JAMB further submitted that two separate meetings were held between officials of the Board and the Committee of Vice Chancellors which has in attendance, one representative each from the Federal, State and Private Universities. The idea was accepted in principle, and in its consultation drive, the issue came up at year 2015 Policy meeting on Admissions and was extensively discussed. Some of the Vice-Chancellors accepted it, while others kicked against. This led to the reversal of the new policy to allow for wider consultations so as to carry everybody along.

On the directive to the Committee to inquire into circumstances surrounding the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) policy including all allegations of favouritism and generally, review the power of JAMB vis-a-vis admissions; JAMB insist it maintains a very transparent and robust system that makes it impossible to favour any candidate. The Committee was informed that:

- (a) Federal Government guidelines on admissions clearly states that 45 *per cent* should be admitted purely on merit, 35 *per cent* on Locality (Catchment) and 20 *per cent* to Educationally Less Disadvantage States (ELDS for Federal Government owned institutions).
- (b) Equally important is the emphasis on Science to Arts ratio which reflects 60:40 Science/Arts ratio and 40 *per cent* merit and 40 *per cent* catchment and 20 *per cent* less developed State for States Tertiary institutions.

In practice, the Institutions (Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of education both public and private) do the selection and placement of candidates while JAMB then scrutinises to ensure compliance of A and B.

The Private institutions will normally declare quota as approved by their Proprietors. Equally of note is the fact that there are many vacancies in the private institutions that are not taken up due to very high fees charged by the schools. The Board has always carried out its admissions in an open forum where Heads of Tertiary Institutions converge and are briefed on the general performance of candidates in its examinations, instruments to adopt for admissions, recommendations on cut-off mark and other parameters for the smooth process of the exercise. The big issue is limited quota of actual number of candidates that an institution can admit.

On the Need to Extend Validity Period of JAMB examination from one to three years, JAMB management maintains that, it is positively inclined and open to suggestions likely to improve the operations of the Board and which will benefit candidates the more. However, there is the need to address the challenge of limited access (carrying Capacity) in the federal institutions and high fees in the private institutions.

Again on this, the Board has constituted a Committee to look into all the issues including highlighting the likely problems that may arise from the proposed policy and proffer solutions.

The National Universities Commission submitted that the number of candidates admitted usually depends on the carrying capacity of the institutions which in itself is dependent on human and material resources, and operational capital available to the institutions. The carrying capacity of each institution is usually approved by the National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education and National Commission for Colleges of Education periodically.

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To deal with the challenge posed by this, the Hon. Minister of State suggested that the regulating agencies should consider slight increase in class capacity in order to increase the carrying capacity which will allow for admission of more candidates.

The National Commission for Colleges of Education, informed the Committee that:

- (a) The new JAMB policy is a welcome development. National Commission for Colleges of Education stated that over the years, there has been dearth of candidates willing to go to Colleges of Education. The few that are ready prefer the first generation Colleges of Education. This has resulted in few Colleges of Education having more candidates over and above others. However, JAMB should create forum for all stakeholders to further deliberate on the issue.
- (b) The enabling law establishing JAMB should be reviewed to accommodate the new policy.
- (c) Post-UTME should be stopped, Candidates who sat for JAMB examinations should not be subjected to further examinations by the tertiary institutions. Rather, the institutions should fashion out a system where the results of students during the first year will determine if they are capable to pursue the course of study;
- (d) Since the curriculum for JAMB examination has a life span, result validity could be tied to existing JAMB curriculum; and the law amended accordingly.
- (e) The carrying capacity of the existing tertiary institutions should be increased to make room for the admission of more qualified candidates.

The Association of tutorial School Operator submitted that UTME is expected to be an entrance exam and as such its validity should not be more than a year since the Exam is only to secure admission into a tertiary School. It is an exam based on cut-off marks and cut-off mark is dependent on the brilliance or success of the candidates in a particular year.

Furthermore the association submitted that, if the essence of introducing the new policy is to alleviate the suffering of parents on the money spent on exams, the fee should not be above Three Thousand Naira Only (3,000.00). The Board no longer prints examination papers and do not pay many invigilators since the examination is Computer Based Test.

According to their findings, JAMB pays about Five Hundred Naira (N500:00) on each candidate to CBT centres. Equally, change of institution and course form which candidates pay for, should be free.

The Association further submitted that Post UTME should be stopped since JAMB examination came into our system due to leakage of examination papers which has been eliminated by CBT. They insist that any school not satisfied with the UTME score and want to further examine the candidates admitted by JAMB should bear the cost and not pass it to the parents.

Equally burdensome is the issue of acceptance fee charged by universities after students are offered admission. The Association want the Senate to know that candidates pay a compulsory seven hundred naira (700:00) to fill the jamb form which is supposed to be filled free of charge.

Committee Findings:

- (1) The success of every admission exercise depends mainly on the institutions and the admission quota approved for the School.
- (2) Admission quotas are determined yearly as a result of limited carrying capacity in the various tertiary institutions. This limited carrying capacity is a function of funding available to the entire education sector. Limitation in Funding does not allow for progression in carrying capacity.
- (3) Most candidates prefer to study in Universities than polytechnics and colleges of education thereby creating huge demand for University spaces while wasting the available spaces in the polytechnics and colleges of education.
- (4) Also, the high fees charged by the private universities make them less attractive to parents.
- (5) Increasingly, there are different layers of fees/expenses candidates incur while doing the JAMB examination.

Committee Recommendations:

On the Resolution Urging the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) to consult widely, JAMB is already working proactively on this and only needs to get the information to the wider public before final decision is taken by the Education Ministry. Committee recommends that Joint Admission and Matriculation Board be informed to quickly conclude all actions on the policy before the conduct of the next JAMB examination.

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On the directive of the Committee to inquire into circumstances surrounding the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) policy including all allegations of favouritism and, generally review the power of JAMB vis-à-vis admissions, JAMB insist they maintain a very transparent and robust system that makes it impossible to favour any candidate.

Also in practice, the Institutions (Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of education both public and private) actually do the selection and placement of candidates while JAMB scrutinises for compliance with the guidelines for the year. Therefore, Committee could not establish the allegations of favouritism levelled against Joint Admission and Matriculation Board. However, as soon as Concrete decision is reached on the policy by Joint Admission and Matriculation Board, the Senate should then amend the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board act.

On the Need to Extend Validity Period of JAMB examination from one to three years:

The Committee recommends that JAMB entrance examination validity should not be more than a year rather the issue of carrying capacity which ultimately determines admission quotas should be addressed immediately. This is an area that needs urgent intervention. The Committee knows that huge funds are necessary to run higher education. Therefore, more funds should be appropriated based on real data of persons between the ages 18-35 which form the bulk of persons admitted into tertiary schools. This will provide more facilities such as classrooms, lecture halls, furniture, Libraries, laboratories, workstations, learning and teaching aids, hostels *et cetera*, thereby increasing the carrying capacity of the schools.

Committee equally recommends that Computer Laboratories be built and equipped in all the Federal Institutions for ease of writing the CBT.

Committee further recommends that JAMB fee should not exceed Two Thousand, Five Hundred Naira (₦2,500.00). Equally, changes of institution and course form and all other incidental activities around the exams should be free.

The President: Is there any contribution?

Senator Gobir Ibrahim Abdullahi (Sokoto East): Mr. President, the Report is good and they have done very well except where the Committee recommends that *JAMB Entrance Exams validity should not be more than a year rather the issue of carrying capacity which ultimately determines admission quotas should be addressed immediately*. To address this, it is not a short term issue; it is a long term issue.

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Also, if we say the validity should not exceed one year, it is wrong, we should extend the validity of JAMB Exams for three years because it is necessary. If WAEC is for life, why can JAMB result not be for three years? I support those who want amendment to that recommendation.

Senator Lidani Joshua Moltobok (Gombe South): Mr. President, I will recall that I initiated the Motion that led to this investigation. One of the points that I raised was the issue of validity of the JAMB result. After the Motion was passed, I got a lot of calls from various students group and parents supporting the idea of extending the validity of JAMB period. As Senator Gobir had pointed out, WAEC and NECO results are for life, I do not see why JAMB should not be for at least three years because if you are unable to gain admission in a particular year, you should wait for the next year and use the same result to seek for admission so that parents are not put at stress at every year sourcing for funds to pay for JAMB Examination fees. It will also help JAMB because it will curtail the number of students that always sit for JAMB and reduce the required expenses.

This recommendation is at variance with the position of JAMB, paragraph 2.5 of the documents which says, *the Board has constituted a Committee to look into all the issues including highlighting the likely problems that may arise from the proposed policy and proffer solution*. Therefore, JAMB itself is not ruling out the possibility of extending the validity period, it only says it has set up a Committee to look into the possibility. Regrettably, this Committee is shutting the door to this proposal; we need to be more flexible on this matter. We should allow for validity, at least, three years.

Senator Musa Mohammed Rabiu Kwankwaso (Kano Central): Mr. President, I support this Report especially the issue of reducing the cost from about ₦18,000 which is the total charges to ₦2,500. I am very much aware that there are many children across this country that cannot afford this ₦2,500. It is not the issue of JAMB; we have the issue of WAEC, NECO and other Organisations that arbitrarily sit down locally and fixed all sorts of fees, that has been a very serious issue, especially those of us who are in contact with our communities. I am very much aware of the challenges these children are facing. In fact, most of these fees were being settled by Counsellors, Chairmen and Senators. I am also aware as a former Governor that we have done so much and all other Governors are working to ensure that this money is being paid.

With the financial challenges in this country, we are finding it extremely difficult for these brilliant young men and women to scale through because of the money; I did not believe that is correct. Worst is the issue of collecting money and spending it by these Organisations.

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One of the Organisations was reported collecting ~~₦~~8 Billion, another one ~~₦~~12 Billion and when they were asked to tell us how they were spending the money, they find it very difficult to explain.

My recommendation is that this money which is not being effectively utilised by this Organisation should be reduced by huge percentage. Even if it is reduced to ~~₦~~2,500 for JAMB, it should be tied to ability to pay. Also, all other Organisations should not be allowed to be collecting this money because they are not spending it effectively.

Senator James Ebiowou Manager (Delta South): Mr. President, while I appreciate the good work that was done by the Committee on Education led by Senator Ma'aji, I have a very slight view on the position taken by the Committee and also my Colleague Senator Kwankwaso.

We are aware of the funding gaps that in the budget and if we reduce the fee from ~~₦~~18,000.00 to ~~₦~~2,500, and then we are equally talking about change of institution, course form and all other incidental activities around the examinations should be free. In my humble view, ~~₦~~2,500 is reasonable because we never can tell what is happening there but most of these institutions did not have adequate purchasing provision, so, if we remove everything from them, then these institutions can barely function. They need to raise money internally to be able to move forward, if they are to raise the money and spend on their own, then we must put something in place maybe Committee of the Senate or some other institutions to whom they would be accountable. But if we remove the entire money for the whole process would be free, then this Committee's JAMB as the Exams Conducting Authority will come to nothing.

Senator Ahmad Lawan (Yobe North): Mr. President, let me congratulate Senator Binta Masi Garba and her members for the Report and I want to comment on two issues. I will start by concurring with the previous speakers regarding the JAMB Entrance Exams validity of either one or three years, unless we are looking at the commercial advantage, JAMB should really allow three years of validity for its entrance examination results. Given the fact that someone has done so well in the past examinations, I do not think that we are asking of JAMB too much to have a validity of three years; in fact, we should push that very hard.

Secondly, on recommendation 4.3 (2) *Committee equally recommends that Computer Laboratories be built and equipped in all the federal institutions for ease of writing the Computer Base Test (CBT).*

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The Committee should have gone a bit further to recommend that the National Council on Education where you have the Federal Ministry of Education and all the State Ministries of Education coming together to take a definite position. If you build or construct a CBT in a Federal Government College, you will still have many of the State institutions not having CBT JAMB centres. We can only get over the issue if the States are working *in tandem* with what the Federal Ministry of Education will be doing.

Therefore, based on this, I believe that we can achieve so much for the youth of this country to give them that liberty to exercise three year validity and also have the CBT JAMB centres for them to write their examinations conveniently and comfortably.

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, I am a bit uncomfortable with this validity period because a valid question can be asked that I have struggled to get ~~₦~~2,500, let us assume that is the amount to be paid, for the purpose of writing exam and I wrote the exam and passed but was told that I cannot get admission. Eventually, when another year comes I was asked to go and look for ~~₦~~2,500 to write another exam, is that fair?

More so, we are aware that even in the placing of candidates by JAMB, the accusation of favouritism has always been there and we cannot run away from it. Those who are lucky to get notes from powerful people will get admission even when their scores are less than the ordinary Nigerian who has paid the ~~₦~~2,500 and passed. They cannot be asked to suffer injustice. I am of the view that it is not the issue of pursuing, it is the issue of taking a stand on this particular matter that the validity of three years must stay and that any candidate who writes exams and passed is entitled to remain on line looking for admission for three years while we look on the other side trying to expand the class room, the teachers and whatever.

This issue of validity really matters. I urge that we take a stand on it today and affirm the fact that three years contrary to the recommendation of the Committee should be the determining factor for the purpose of that examination.

Senator Adeola Solomon Olamilekan (Lagos West): Mr. President, let me join my colleagues in commending the Committee for a job well done but I want to correct an impression. First is the issue of this validity period; I do not know the basis or the yardstick the Committee has used in coming to a conclusion that one year is enough for the validity period. We are all aware that JAMB is about cut off marks.

1855

For example, if in this year the cut off mark in the university in a course like medicine is about 250 and you scored 236, you have to wait. The following year if the cut off mark is about 253, you have to wait and the third year the same thing, so until the fourth year before you now go and write another exam. I want us to look at this very critically, analyse it while taking position on the validity period.

On the issue of funding, we are all aware that the average number of students that write JAMB in a year is about two million students. Now the Committee has recommended that ₦2,500 should be used. Presently, what is paid for you to sit for a JAMB exam is about ₦17,000 to ₦18,000. The actual amount that goes to JAMB as at today is ₦5,000; all other costs are hidden costs that is not known to anybody.

Therefore, while taking all these positions by the Committee, I want us to please believe that the Committee must have done a very good and thorough job in arriving on all these recommendations. On the position made by Senator Rabiun Kwankwaso, JAMB is one institution that this Senate must pay proper attention to.

We are to do a thorough investigation on the IGR and the application of these funds. JAMB generates so much money and if they are not putting anything back in return or been able to tell Nigerians what they are using these excessive funds for, I believe it calls for a lot of question. So I am *in tandem* with what Senator Rabiun Kwankwaso has said and I believe we should look into it.

The President: Distinguished Senator Adeosun, I like your collaboration with the former Governor. Can we now go to the recommendations?

- (1) *The Committee recommends that Joint Admission and Matriculation Board be informed to quickly conclude all actions on the policy before the conduct of the next JAMB examination.*

Question put and agreed to.

- (2) *The Committee could not establish the allegations of favouritism levelled against Joint Admission and Matriculation Board. However, as soon as concrete decision is reached on the policy by Joint Admission and Matriculation Board, the Senate should then amend the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board Act.*

Question put and negatived.

1856

- (3) *The Committee recommends that Joint Admission and Matriculation Board entrance examination validity should not be more than a year rather than the issue of carrying capacity which ultimately determines admission quarter should be addressed immediately.*

Question proposed.

Senator Joshua Moltobok Lidani (Gombe South): I would like to propose that we amend this recommendation to read as follows: *the Committee recommends that Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) entrance examination validity period should be three academic years.*

Senator Binta Masi Garba (Adamawa North): Mr. President, when we had the meeting with the Chairman on the validity period, JAMB told us that most of the intended students are mostly into Universities and not Polytechnics and Colleges of Education. They said that the carrying capacity of universities is a problem that is if you want to read medicine. You take an example of University of Ibadan; they were only accessible to 50 students as a carrying capacity. University of Benin mentioned that their carrying capacity should not be more than 50 and the cut off marks varies. The cut off mark this year might be 263; it might not be 263 next year.

What they are now insisting on was that since there is limitation in the carrying capacity, they cannot absorb. For changing courses, some of them were given courses and a typical example of a student who vies to read Law in the University of Benin was given English Language.

The President: Senator Binta, I cannot see the information you are giving us. Distinguished colleagues, there is an amendment, is there any seconder to that amendment?

Senator Ibrahim Gobir (Sokoto East): Mr. President, I second the Motion that the validity of JAMB should be three academic years.

The President: Distinguished Colleagues, let me put the Question on the amendment to Recommendation 3.

Amendment put and agreed to.

- (4) *The Committee recommends that Computer laboratories be built and equipped in all federal institutions for the case of writing CBT.*

Question proposed.

1857

Senator Kabiru Gaya (Kano South): Mr. President, my amendment is that *there are very few federal institutions and so I will recommend that the National Council on Education should set a minimum number of CBT and JAMB Centres for each State.*

The President: Is there any Second?

Senator Olusola Adeyeye (Osun Central): Mr. President, I second that to aid access by all our youths to tertiary education, that these computer centres be established in accordance to guidelines from National Council on Education specifying how many centres should be created for each particular State depending on their needs.

Amendment put and agreed to.

- (5) *The Committee further recommends that JAMB fee should not exceed ₦2,500 only, equally change of institution and course form and other incidental activities around the exam should be free.*

Question put and agreed to.

The President: Is there any additional Prayers

Senator Musa Mohammed Rabiu Kwankwaso: Mr. President, I quite agree with Senator Solomon who suggested that an investigation should start immediately to find out how these organisations are spending the billions they are collecting every year. While that is going on, in addition to JAMB, I also want to recommend that other organisations especially WAEC and NECO should also reduce their fees by 75 per cent. *(Interruption)*

The President: Just give me the recommendation.

Senator Musa Mohammed Rabiu Kwankwaso: *In addition to JAMB, other relevant organisations like WAEC and NECO who are charging exorbitant fees should reduce the fees by 70 per cent immediately so that our children can afford to take the relevant examinations.*

The President: Is there any seconder? Once we have moved to the next item, we should try to ensure that we do not go back. There might be need for another recommendation because we have asked for a recommendation that requires an amendment to the Act. So, we need a recommendation just to direct the Committee on Tertiary Education to review the JAMB Act accordingly.

1858

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, I move that we urge the Committee on Education to present an amendment to the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Act for the purpose of inserting three (3) years validity period to validate the decision the Senate had already taken.

The President: Is there any Second?

Senator Godswill Akpabio: Mr. President, I second the Motion moved by the Leader.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved:

- (1) That Joint Admission and Matriculation Board be informed to quickly conclude all actions on the New JAMB Policy before the conduct of the next JAMB examination.
- (2) That JAMB entrance exam validity period should be three (3) academic years.
- (3) That the National Council on Education should set a minimum number of Computer Based Test (CBT) and JAMB Centres for each State.
- (4) That the JAMB fee should not exceed ₦2,500 only. Equally, change of institution and course form and other incidental activities around the exam should be free; and
- (5) Urge the Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFUND to present an amendment to the JAMB Act for the purpose of inserting three (3) years validity period to validate the decision the Senate had already taken.

Senator Isiaka Adeleke (Osun West): Mr. President, if we look at the recommendation 4(ii), the last sentence there contains the amendment which we just proposed, that the Senate should amend the JAMB Act.

The President: Senator Adeleke, we rejected that recommendation because that amendment was too vague. I want to thank the Committee for a very good Report. This is an area of great importance particularly some of these recommendations are mere until the Committee can do the necessary amendment as regards the JAMB Act and also ensure that these fees that are collected are used judiciously.

1859

1860

**Report on 2015 FCT Appropriation Act (Amendment)
Bill, 2016**

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, the fourth Order of the Day is the Presentation and Consideration of Conference Committee Report on the 2015 FCT Appropriation Act (Amendment) Bill, 2016. You will recall that the Senate and the House of Representatives passed different versions of the 2015 FCT Appropriation (Amendment) Bill, 2016.

The Conference Committee of both Houses have met and harmonised the difference in accordance with the Senate standing Orders 88. You may wish to invite distinguished Senator Dino Melaye to move the Motion for the Senate to receive and consider the Conference Report.

Senator Dino Melaye: Mr. President, the House of Representatives just constituted their Conference Committee today and we are expected to have the conference today, so we will report progress in the next Legislative Day.

The President: You are meeting with the House of Representatives today and so by tomorrow you will bring the Report.

Suspension of other Item on the Order Paper

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, I move that we step down the last item on the Order Paper to the next Legislative Day.

Senator Godswill Akpabio: Mr. President, I second the Motion moved by the Leader.

Question put and agreed to.

(With the leave of the Senate, the last item on the Order Paper stood down to the next Legislative Day.

ADJOURNMENT

Senator Bala Ibn Na'allah: Mr. President, having exhausted all the items on the Order Paper, I hereby move that the Senate do adjourn till Thursday, 3rd March, 2016 at 10.00 a.m. prompt.

Senator Godswill Akpabio: Mr. President, I second the Motion moved by the Leader.

Question put and agreed to

Resolved: That the Senate do stand adjourned till Thursday, 3rd March, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. prompt.

The Senate accordingly adjourned at 1.01p.m.