SENATE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, 14th April, 2016

1. The Senate met at 10:55 a.m. The Deputy Senate President read Prayers.

2. **Votes and Proceedings:**
The Senate examined the Votes and Proceedings of Wednesday, 13th April, 2016.

Question was put and the Votes and Proceedings were approved.

3. **Announcements:**

(a) Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Senate Caucus Meeting:

The Deputy Senate President read a letter from Senator Godswill O. Akpabio (*Akwa Ibom North-West*) as follows:

SENATOR GODSWILL O. AKPABIO
AKWA IBOM NORTH-WEST SENATORIAL DISTRICT

14th April, 2016

Your Excellency,

There will be a meeting of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) Senate Caucus immediately after Plenary at Hearing Room 1.

Attendance is mandatory.

(Signed)
Senator Godswill O. Akpabio
Minority Leader

(b) Acknowledgement:
The Deputy Senate President acknowledged the presence of Members of Student Union Government of Federal College of Forestry, Ibadan, Oyo State, who were in the gallery to observe Senate Proceedings.

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4. Petitions:

Rising on Rule 41, Senator Chukwuka G. Utazi *(Enugu North)* drew the attention of the Senate to two petitions from;

(*i*) Chief Tobias Eze, on behalf of Ochima Community, over appeal on encroachment of Ochima residential/communal land located at Ochima in Igbo-Etiti Local Government Area of Enugu State by the Nigerian Army; and

(*ii*) His Royal Highness Eze John Akor, over the encroachment on ancestral, communal farms and residential land belonging to Ukpabi-Nimbo, Uzo-uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State by the Nigerian Army.

He urged the Senate to look into the matters.

Petitions laid and accordingly referred to the Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions [Rule 41(3)].

5. Matter of Urgent Public Importance:

Rising on Rule 42, Senator Yusuf A. Yusuf (*Taraba Central*) drew the attention of the Senate to the outbreak of communal clashes in some communities in Garbabi Ward of Gashaka Local Government Area of Taraba State. He sought and obtained the leave of the Senate to present the matter.

Matter to stand over to the next Legislative Day [Rule 42(2)].

6. Presentation of Bills:

(*i*) National Transport Commission (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2016 (SB. 242) — *Read the First Time.*

(*ii*) Sheriffs and Civil Process Act, 2004 (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (SB. 244) — *Read the First Time.*

(*iii*) JAMB Act, 2004 (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (SB. 245) — *Read the First Time.*

(*iv*) Nigeria Customs Service Bill, 2016 (SB. 246) — *Read the First Time.*

(*v*) Customs and Excise Management Act, 2004 (Repeal and Re-enactment) Bill, 2016 (SB. 247) — *Read the First Time.*

7. Administration of Criminal Justice Act, 2015 (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (SB.249):

Consideration of Bill deferred to another Legislative Day.

8. Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act CAP CI5 LFN 2004 (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (SB.248):

Motion made: That a Bill for an Act to amend the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act CAP CI5 LFN 2004 and for other related matters, 2016 be read the Second Time (*Senator Peter O. Nwaoboshi — Delta North*).

Debate:

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the Second Time and referred to the Committees on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions; and Judiciary, Human Rights and Legal Matters to report within two (2) weeks.

9. **Nigeria Institute of Soil Science (Establishment, etc.) Bill, 2016 (SB.126):**
Motion made: That a Bill for an Act to Provide for the establishment of the Nigeria Institute of Soil Science, and for other matters connected therewith, 2016 be read the Second Time (*Senator Emmanuel Bwacha — Taraba South*).

Debate:

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the Second Time and referred to the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development to report within four (4) weeks.

10. **University Teaching Hospitals (Reconstitution of Boards, Etc.) Act, 2004 (Amendment) Bill, 2016 (SB.194):**
Motion made: That a Bill for an Act to amend the University Teaching Hospitals (Reconstitution of Boards, Etc.) Act, 2004 and other matters related thereto, 2016 be read the Second Time (*Senator Chukwuka G. Utazi — Enugu North*).

Debate:

Question put and agreed to.

Bill accordingly read the Second Time and referred to the Committee on Health to report within Four (4) weeks.

11. **Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions:**
Report on the petition from Mrs. Regina Poto against Diamond Bank Plc.:
Motion made: That the Senate do consider the Report of the Committee on Ethics, Privileges and Public Petitions in respect of a petition from Mrs. Regina Poto against Diamond Bank Plc. for alleged forced disengagement from the service of the bank (*Senator Samuel N. Anyanwu — Imo East*).

Question put and agreed to.

Report presented.

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):
Question: That because there is no evidence to support the petitioner's claim that she should be paid the sum of Twenty-Seven Million, Fifty-Nine Thousand, Five Hundred and Seventy-One Naira, Twenty-Three Kobo (₦27,059,571.23) on retirement, the Senate cannot grant that prayer to compel Diamond Bank to pay — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):
Question: That Diamond Bank Plc. should make available the necessary documents that would assist the petitioner access her pension contribution.

Amendment Proposed:
Immediately after the word "contribution" in line 2, *insert* the words "within 60 days from today" (*Senator Mao A. Ohuabunwa — Abia North*).

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:

(*i*) That because there is no evidence to support the petitioner's claim that she should be paid the sum of Twenty-Seven Million, Fifty-Nine Thousand, Five Hundred and Seventy-One Naira, Twenty-Three Kobo (₦27,059,571.23) on retirement, the Senate cannot grant that prayer to compel Diamond Bank to pay; and

(*ii*) That Diamond Bank Plc. should make available the necessary documents that would assist the petitioner access her pension contribution within 60 days from today ***(S/Res/130/01/16).***

12. Motions:

(a) The use of substandard or used tyres on Nigerian roads.

Consideration of Motion deferred to another Legislative Day.

(b) The Abduction of Chibok School Girls - Two years after:

Motion made: That the Senate, saddened about the long absence of the Chibok girls abducted by the Boko Haram insurgence from Chibok community two years ago;

notes that 14th of this month (today) makes it 730 days, 17,520 hours and 1,051,200 minutes that our Chibok school girls have been under captivity. It would be recalled that on the night of 14 -15 April, 2014, 276 girls were kidnapped from Government Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State, the responsibility for the abduction was claimed by Boko Haram. Luckily, 57 of the school girls managed to escape making 219 still missing;

notes also that on October 17, 2014, hopes were raised that the 219 remaining girls might soon be released after the Nigerian Army announced a truce between the insurgents and government forces. The announcement coincided with the sixth-month anniversary of the girls' capture and followed a month of negotiations held in Saudi Arabia. However, the announcement was met with doubt (and later proved futile) as this was not the first time the government had claimed a breakthrough in negotiations with the insurgents;

notes further that outside of propaganda videos created by the Islamist militant group, none of those girls has been seen since and the families of the missing girls have been traumatized because of their daughters absence;

aware that the abduction has taken a toll on the people of Chibok, particularly the families of the missing girls. An association of parents of the abducted school girls, said 18 mothers and fathers have died since the mass abduction, while 4 members of the Bring Back Our Girls group who were earnestly waiting for the return of these girls have died without realizing their dreams of seeing the girls alive and back;

worried that the Government Secondary School where the kidnapping happened two years ago is now a pile of rubbles. The school which was demolished is yet to be rebuilt, leaving Chibok and the towns around it without a school;

worried also that the abduction of over 200 girls by Boko Haram has wrongly affected us as a people as could be seen in the international condemnation of the government's slow reaction to this unprecedented outrage committed against Nigerian womanhood. Never before has such criminal viciousness been perpetrated on Nigerian womanhood;

concerned that as a parent, a Nigerian and a human being, it is a harrowing feeling knowing that these girls are still under the mercy of such a violent group of hoodlums. I can only imagine the emotional state of minds of the parents, guardians and relatives of the missing girls. I can only imagine the psychological torture of not knowing where your daughter, niece or friend is for the past two years. I can only imagine the life of servitude that these innocent teenage girls are going through in the hands of these murderous lunatics. I can only envision the unspeakable cruelties and atrocities that these dastard sect members must have been inflicting on the girls for the past two years;

further concerned that the abduction has become a myth and their whereabouts an enigma. These girls have dreams and aspirations, and under the eyes of God and the laws of man, they have every right to pursue and transform such dreams to reality. Amongst the abductees is one Safiya Abdu. What is her crime? Seeking formal education in order to enhance the living conditions of her family, become a better person in life and to contribute positively to national development. Also abducted is one Esther Usman. Perhaps she has a dream of becoming the President like one of her role models - Joyce Banda, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf or the late Margaret Thatcher; and

notes that we cannot succeed as a government until those girls are released. In the words of Pastor Tunde Bakare, "No citizen is important and no citizen is distinguished until all citizens are important and distinguished". Getting back the over 200 Chibok school girls into the society is important and a must for our Security Agencies.

Accordingly resolves to:

(*i*) empathize with the parents and the entire people of Chibok over this ugly incidence that took place in their community;

(*ii*) commend the Bring Back Our Girls group for their doggedness in the campaign for the release of the Chibok girls;

(*iii*) mandate the Security Agencies to do everything humanly possible to ensure the release of the girls;

(*iv*) invite the National Security Adviser (NSA) and all the Security Chiefs to brief the Senate in a Closed Session on their efforts so far at recovering the abducted girls;

(*v*) urge the government to rebuild the Chibok Secondary School to alleviate the suffering of the student's resident in that community and its environment (*Senator Dino Melaye — Kogi West*).

Debate:

Proposed Resolution (i):

Question: That the Senate do empathize with the parents and the entire people of Chibok over this ugly incidence that took place in their community — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (ii):

Question: That the Senate do commend the Bring Back Our Girls group for their doggedness in the campaign for the release of the Chibok girls — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iii):

Question: That the Senate do mandate the Security Agencies to do everything humanly possible to ensure the release of the girls — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (iv):
Question: That the Senate do invite the National Security Adviser (NSA) and all the Security Chiefs to brief the Senate in a Closed Session on their efforts so far at recovering the abducted girls — *Agreed to.*

Proposed Resolution (v):
Question: That the Senate do urge the government to rebuild the Chibok Secondary School to alleviate the suffering of the student's resident in that community and its environment.

Amendment Proposed:
Leave out the provision in Resolution (v) and *insert* the following instead thereof:
"Urge the Federal Government to take over the Chibok Community School as a Federal Government School for rebuilding and rehabilitation" *(Senator Mao A. Ohuabunwa — Abia North).*

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Additional Proposed Resolution:
Insert Additional Proposed Resolution as follows:
"Urge Nigerians to intensify prayers for the release of the abducted girls" *(Senator Godswill O. Akpabio — Akwa Ibom North-West).*

Question that the amendment be made, put and agreed to.

Resolved:
That the Senate do:

(*i*) empathize with the parents and the entire people of Chibok over this ugly incidence that took place in their community;

(*ii*) commend the Bring Back Our Girls group for their doggedness in the campaign for the release of the Chibok girls;

(*iii*) mandate the Security Agencies to do everything humanly possible to ensure the release of the girls;

(*iv*) invite the National Security Adviser (NSA) and all the Security Chiefs to brief the Senate in a Closed Session on their efforts so far at recovering the abducted girls;

(*v*) urge the Federal Government to take over the Chibok Community School as a Federal Government School for rebuilding and rehabilitation; and

(*vi*) urge Nigerians to intensify prayers for the release of the abducted girls ***(S/Res/131/01/16).***

The Senate offered prayers for safe release of the abducted Chibok girls.

(c) Need for the establishment of Inland Ports at Onitsha, Enugu and other Land Lock States:

Consideration of Motion deferred to another Legislative Day.

(d) The Need to Prosecute Building Laws Violators:

Consideration of Motion deferred to another Legislative Day.

13. Adjournment:

Motion made: That the Senate do now adjourn till Tuesday, 19th April, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. (*Deputy Senate Leader*).

Adjourned accordingly at 1:51 *p.m.*

Ike Ekweremadu, CFR
Deputy Senate President,
Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.