



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Wednesday, 29 November, 2017

1. The House met at 11.09 a.m. Mr Deputy Speaker read the Prayers.
2. **Votes and Proceedings**
Mr Deputy Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the *Votes and Proceedings* of Tuesday, 28 November, 2017.

The Votes and Proceedings was adopted by unanimous consent.

3. **Announcements**

- (a) **Visitors in the Gallery:**

Mr Deputy Speaker recognised the presence of the following visitors in the Gallery:

- (i) Staff and Students of *Unity International School*, Gwarimpa Estate, Abuja; and
 - (ii) Staff and Students of *Harmony International School*, Madalla, Niger State.

- (b) **Bereavement:**

Mr Deputy Speaker read a communication from Hon. Nwazunku Chukwuma (*Ebonyi/Ohaukwu Federal Constituency*), announcing the demise of a former Member of the House, Hon. Nwegede Nwangbo (*Ishielu Federal Constituency 1964 - 1966 and 1979 - 1983*), which occurred on 26 October, 2017 at the age of 95.

4. **Presentation of Bills**

The following Bills were read the *First Time*:

- (1) Fiscal Responsibility Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1225).
 - (2) Export (Prohibition) Act (Repeal) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1226).
 - (3) Pre-shipment Inspection of Export Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1227).
 - (4) Financial Control Department (Establishment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1228).
 - (5) National Industrial Court Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1229).
 - (6) National Library Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1230).

- (7) Medical Rehabilitation Therapists (Registration) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1231).
- (8) Federal University, Aba (Establishment) Bill 2017 (HB. 1232).
- (9) Police Act, 1943 and Police Regulations, 1968 Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1233).
- (10) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1234).
- (11) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1235).
- (12) Criminal Justice (Release from Custody) Special Provisions) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1236).
- (13) Labour Transportation Bill, 2017 (HB. 1237).
- (14) Niger Delta Development Commission Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1238).
- (15) Chartered Institute of Entrepreneurs Bill, 2017 (HB. 1239).
- (16) Institute of Chartered Finance and Control Professionals (Establishment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1240).
- (17) Estate Surveyors and Valuers (Registration, etc.) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2017 (HB. 1241).

5. Presentation of Reports

(i) *Committee on Pensions:*

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do receive Report of the Committee on Pensions on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Pension Reform Act, 2014 to Exclude/Exempt Members of the Nigeria Police Force (and Other Para-Military and Law Enforcement Agencies) from the Contributory Pension Scheme (HB. 398)" (*Hon. Hassan Adamu Shekarau — Birnin/Gwari/Giwa Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Report laid.

(ii) *Committee on Pensions:*

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do receive Report of the Committee on Pensions on a Bill for an Act to Amend the Pension Reform Act, 2014 to Reposition the Act for Effective Service Delivery (HB. 865)" (*Hon. Hassan Adamu Shekarau — Birnin/Gwari/Giwa Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Report laid.

6. **A Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit as the Central Body in Nigeria Responsible for Receiving, Requesting, Analyzing and Disseminating Financial Intelligence Report and Other Information to Law Enforcement, Security and Intelligence Agencies and Other Relevant Authorities; and for Related Matters (HB.1082) — Third Reading.**
Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigerian Financial Intelligence Unit as the Central Body in Nigeria Responsible for Receiving, Requesting, Analyzing

and Disseminating Financial Intelligence Report and Other Information to Law Enforcement, Security and Intelligence Agencies and Other Relevant Authorities; and for Related Matters (HB. 1082) be now read the Third Time" (*Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila — House Leader*).

Question Agreed to.

Bill read the Third time and passed.

A Bill for an Act to Authorize the issue from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation the total sum of ₦8,612,236,953,214 (Eight Trillion, Six Hundred and Twelve Billion, Two Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Fourteen Naira) only, of which ₦456,458,654,074 (Four Hundred and Fifty-Six Billion, Four Hundred and Fifty-Eight Million, Six Hundred and Fifty-Four Thousand, Seventy-Four Naira) only, is for Statutory Transfers, ₦2,233,835,365,699 (Two Trillion, Two Hundred and Thirty-Three Billion, Eight Hundred and Thirty-Five Million, Three Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand, Six Hundred and Ninety-Nine Naira) only, is for Debt Service, ₦3,494,277,820,219 (Three Trillion, Four Hundred Ninety-Four Billion, Two Hundred and Seventy-Seven Million, Eight Hundred and Twenty-Thousand, Two Hundred and Nineteen Naira) only, is for Recurrent (Non-Debt) Expenditure while the sum of ₦2,427,665,113,222 (Two Trillion, Four Hundred and Twenty-Seven Billion, Six Hundred and Sixty-Five Million, One Hundred and Thirteen Thousand, Two Hundred and Twenty-Two Naira) only, is for contribution to the Development Fund for Capital Expenditure for the year ending on 31 December, 2018 (HB. 1207) — *Second Reading*

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do resume debate on a Bill for an Act to Authorize the issue from the Consolidated Revenue Fund of the Federation the total sum of ₦8,612,236,953,214 (Eight Trillion, Six Hundred and Twelve Billion, Two Hundred and Thirty-Six Million, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Three Thousand, Two Hundred and Fourteen Naira) only, of which ₦456,458,654,074 (Four Hundred and Fifty-Six Billion, Four Hundred and Fifty-Eight Million, Six Hundred and Fifty-Four Thousand, Seventy-Four Naira) only, is for Statutory Transfers, ₦2,233,835,365,699 (Two Trillion, Two Hundred and Thirty-Three Billion, Eight Hundred and Thirty-Five Million, Three Hundred and Sixty-Five Thousand, Six Hundred and Ninety-Nine Naira) only, is for Debt Service, ₦3,494,277,820,219 (Three Trillion, Four Hundred Ninety-Four Billion, Two Hundred and Seventy-Seven Million, Eight Hundred and Twenty-Thousand, Two Hundred and Nineteen Naira) only, is for Recurrent (Non-Debt) Expenditure while the sum of ₦2,427,665,113,222 (Two Trillion, Four Hundred and Twenty-Seven Billion, Six Hundred and Sixty-Five Million, One Hundred and Thirteen Thousand, Two Hundred and Twenty-Two Naira) only, is for contribution to the Development Fund for Capital Expenditure for the year ending on 31 December, 2018 (HB. 1207)" (*Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila — House Leader*).

Debate.

Debate adjourned.

8. **Rescission of the House Resolution on the Report of the Committee on Local Content on Investigation into the Provision of Indigenous Support Vessel Total Upstream Nigeria Limited, Total Nigeria PLC Tender for Provision of PVC and Terminal Support Ref: NTD 00001632: Pursuant to Order, 9 Rule 1(6) of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives**
Motion made and Question proposed.

The House:

Recalls that on Wednesday, 15 March, 2017, the House considered the Report of the Committee on Local Content on the above matter and adopted the recommendation in the Report;

Notes that the Resolution adopted by the House urged that the whole bidding process be cancelled and a fresh bidding process be introduced within six (6) months in line with the provisions of the Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry Content Development Act, 2010 and the Public Procurement Act, 2007;

Also notes that emerging facts since the adoption of the Resolution require that the House do rescind its Resolution of 15 March 2017 on the matter and commit it to the Committee of the Whole for reconsideration;

Resolves to:

- (i) rescind the Resolution of the House on the bidding process for provision of Indigenous Support Vessel Total Upstream Nigeria Limited; Total Nigeria Plc Tender for provision of PVC and Terminal Support Ref: NTD 00001632 which was adopted on Wednesday, 15 March, 2017; and
- (ii) Commit the recommendation to the Committee of the Whole for reconsideration (*Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila — Surulere I Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Debate adjourned to enable the Committee on Rules and Business to provide the date the matter was referred to the Committee on Public Petitions and report back — Agreed to.

9. Rescission of the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the petition by Egwu Arua Okoro against the Nigeria Customs Service on Wrongful Termination of his Appointment: Pursuant to Order Nine, Rule 1(6) of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives: Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that on Wednesday, 1 March, 2017 the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Egwu Arua Okoro against the Nigeria Customs Service on wrongful termination of his appointment was considered;

Also notes that arising from the consideration of the Report, the House in Recommendation 2 (ii) directed the Nigeria Customs Service to restore Egwu Arua Okoro to what would have been his substantive rank as at 2001 when he would have statutorily retired;

Further notes the erroneous use of year 2001 as the statutory year of his retirement instead of 2011 in the course of reporting to the House by the Committee;

Acknowledges the need to correctly reflect the year "2011" as the retirement date of Egwu Arua Okoro from the Service;

Resolves to:

- (i) rescind its decision on Recommendation (2) of the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the petition of Egwu Arua Okoro against the Nigeria Customs Service on wrongful termination of his appointment; and
- (ii) commit the amended Recommendation (2) to the Committee of the Whole for reconsideration (*Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta — Ukwu East/Ukwu West Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

10. Call for Rehabilitation/ Reconstruction of Maiduguri-Monguno-Baga Road***Motion made and Question proposed:***

The House:

Notes that Maiduguri-Monguno-Baga road which traverses the entire Borno North was constructed in the early 1970's and has not witnessed any rehabilitation work since then;

Aware that the road is the major link between Nigeria and Chad Republic, and is also a major route for transportation of fish and other agricultural products to other parts of Nigeria;

Also aware that owing to the non-rehabilitation of the road over the years, it has become dilapidated and is also being used by the Boko Haram insurgents in planting improvised explosives devices along the road, thereby making it very dangerous to travel on;

Concerned that the state of the road has adversely affected the commercial and social engagements of the people of Borno North and the entire Borno State;

Desirous of the need to rehabilitate/reconstruct the road to make it motorable once more in order to alleviate the hardship of the people of the entire Borno North.

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to, as a matter of urgency, commence rehabilitation of the Maiduguri-Monguno-Baga road to make it motorable; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Works and Appropriations to include the reconstruction of the road in the 2018 Budget proposal (*Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno – Munguno/Marte/Nganzai Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 184/2017).

Motion referred to the Committees on Works, and Appropriations, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

11. Violation of the Niger Delta Development Commission Act and its Attendant Consequences***Motion made and Question proposed:***

The House:

Notes that the tenure of the Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was cut short in 2015 following the dissolution of the Board;

Also notes that the former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Engineer Babachir David Lawal issued letters to the current members of the Board that was inaugurated by the present administration requiring them to serve for the unexpired tenure of the Board that was dissolved in 2015;

Further notes the recent statement by the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation regarding the letters of appointments issued to the Board members by the former acting Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Dr (Mrs) Habila M. Lawal which purported to have granted the Board members fresh tenure of four years, rather than them serving out the unexpired tenure of the dissolved Board;

Equally notes that the pronouncement was in clear violation of section 5 (2) of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Act, 2000 which provides that "where a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board, it shall be filled by the appointment of a successor to hold office for the remainder of the term of office of his predecessor, so however, that the successor shall represent the same interest and shall be appointed by the President, subject to the confirmation of the Senate, in consultation with the House of representatives;

Aware that there is a nexus between the violation of the NDDC Act and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region which has such grave consequences of impacting adversely on oil production and consequently, the nation's revenues from the resource;

Cognizant of the provision of Section 88 (1) (b) (i) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) which empowers the National Assembly, by Resolution, to cause an investigation into the execution or administration of laws enacted by the National Assembly.

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Executive Arm of Government to adhere strictly to the provisions of the NDDC Act of 2000 with respect to the tenure of the current Board; and
- (ii) mandate the Committee on Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to investigate the matter with a view to ensuring compliance with the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Act, 2000 and report back within two (2) weeks for further legislative action (*Hon. Daniel Ofongo — Akamkpa/Biase Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Amendments Proposed:

- (i) In Prayer (ii), line 1, *leave out* the words "mandate the Committee on Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)" and *insert* the words "Set up an *Ad-hoc* Committee" (*Hon. Abdulrahman Shuaibu — Mubi North/Mubi South/Maiha Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Negatived.

- (ii) In Prayer (ii), line 1, *leave out* the words "mandate the Committee on Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC)" and *insert* the words "Committee on Public Petitions" (*Hon. Ogbuide Ihama Omoregie — Oredo Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Negatived.

Main Question on the Motion — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the tenure of the Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) was cut short in 2015 following the dissolution of the Board;

Also noted that the former Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Engineer Babachir David Lawal issued letters to the current members of the Board that was inaugurated by the present administration requiring them to serve for the unexpired tenure of the Board that was dissolved in 2015;

Further noted the recent statement by the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Secretary to the Government of the Federation regarding the letters of appointments issued to the Board members by the former acting Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Dr (Mrs) Habila M. Lawal which purported to have granted the Board members fresh tenure of four years, rather than them serving out the unexpired tenure of the dissolved Board;

Equally noted that the pronouncement was in clear violation of section 5 (2) of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Act, 2000 which provides that "where a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board, it shall be filled by the appointment of a successor to hold office for the remainder of the term of office of his predecessor, so however, that the successor shall represent the same interest and shall be appointed by the President, subject to the confirmation of the Senate, in consultation with the House of representatives;

Aware that there is a nexus between the violation of the NDDC Act and youth restiveness in the Niger Delta region which has such grave consequences of impacting adversely on oil production and consequently, the nation's revenues from the resource;

Cognizant of the provision of Section 88 (1) (b) (i) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) which empowers the National Assembly, by Resolution, to cause an investigation into the execution or administration of laws enacted by the National Assembly.

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Executive Arm of Government to adhere strictly to the provisions of the NDDC Act of 2000 with respect to the tenure of the current Board; and
- (ii) mandate the Committee on Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) to investigate the matter with a view to ensuring compliance with the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) Act, 2000 and report back within two (2) weeks for further legislative action (**HR. 185/2017**).

12. Need to Investigate the Execution of Constituency Projects by Contractors under the National Primary Health Care Development Agency (NPHCDA)

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that Constituency Projects are aimed towards providing social amenities, creating an enabling environment and increasing the standard of living of Nigerians living mainly in the rural communities, leading to the economic, social and political growth and development of the communities;

Aware that proper execution of Constituency Projects would serve as a platform for good governance, transparency and accountability;

Also aware that since 2015, there have been numerous complaints from Honourable members and constituents about poor/non execution of projects by contractors under the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA);

Concerned about the nonchalant attitude of those contractors and the NPHCDA towards execution of Constituency Projects which manifests, for instance in the supply of substandard drugs and medical equipment and construction of primary healthcare centres with low quality materials which has led to severe injuries and loss of lives in some cases;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committees on Health Institutions, and Healthcare Services to investigate the poor/non execution of constituency projects under the National Primary Healthcare Development Agency (NPHCDA) from 2015 to date and report back within six (6) weeks for further legislative action (*Hon. Betty Apiafi – Ahoada East/Abua/Odual Federal Constituency and 10 Others*).

Ordered: Motion referred to the Committee on Rules and Business to advise on the appropriate Committee the matter should be referred to.

13 Need to Investigate the Inhuman and Barbaric Act of Slave Trade Involving the Auctioning of Black Africans in Libya

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that African migrants from nations including Nigeria, Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Niger and Gambia make the dangerous crossing through the Sahara Desert to Libya with hopes of making it over the Mediterranean Sea to Italy and other European countries in search of greener pastures;

Also notes that on November 14, 2017, the US Television Network, CNN broke the news of auctioning of human beings in Libya with a live footage of the auctioning process in which young men were being sold to North African buyers as potential farm hands and one of the unidentified young men sold off for as little as \$400 (₦144,000) is said to be a Nigerian in his twenties;

Further notes that the footage of the auctioning of black Africans in the conflict-torn nation sparked outrage across the world with thousands of people taking to the streets of Paris, France to protest against the modern day slavery, and in reaction, the African Union, on November 17, 2017 called on the Libyan Authorities to investigate the matter.

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Government to liaise with the Government of Libya to find a solution to the menace of migration and modern day slavery in Libya; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Human Rights, and Foreign Affairs to interface with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant stakeholders to identify the factors that encourage the migrants to embark on the perilous journey, proffer solutions that would discourage same and then provide for how the Nigerian youths caught in the web would return to the country and report back within four (4) weeks for further legislative action (*Hon. Saheed Akinade-Fijabi – Ibadan Southwest/Ibadan Northwest Federal Constituency and 1 Other*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that African migrants from nations including Nigeria, Guinea, Senegal, Mali, Niger and Gambia make the dangerous crossing through the Sahara Desert to Libya with hopes of making it over the Mediterranean Sea to Italy and other European countries in search of greener pastures;

Also noted that on November 14, 2017, the US Television Network, CNN broke the news of auctioning of human beings in Libya with a live footage of the auctioning process in which young men were being sold to North African buyers as potential farm hands and one of the unidentified young men sold off for as little as \$400 (₦144,000) is said to be a Nigerian in his twenties;

Further noted that the footage of the auctioning of black Africans in the conflict-torn nation sparked outrage across the world with thousands of people taking to the streets of Paris, France to protest against the modern day slavery, and in reaction, the African Union, on November 17, 2017 called on the Libyan Authorities to investigate the matter.

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Government to liaise with the Government of Libya to find a solution to the menace of migration and modern day slavery in Libya; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Human Rights, and Foreign Affairs to interface with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and relevant stakeholders to identify the factors that encourage the migrants to embark on the perilous journey, proffer solutions that would discourage same and then provide for how the Nigerian youths caught in the web would return to the country and report back within four (4) weeks for further legislative action (**HR. 186/2017**).

14 Need to Stop the Discriminatory Local Language Policy Proposed by the Nigerian Army

Motion made and Question proposed;

The House:

Recognizes and salutes the continuing sacrifice, courage and patriotism of the Nigerian Armed Forces in the various theaters of engagement, particularly against the Boko Haram insurgents in the North East Zone;

Notes the statement by the Spokesman of the Nigerian Army, Brig-Gen. Sani Usman that the Nigerian Army has given its personnel one year, that is by December, 2018, to learn and be proficient in the three major Nigerian languages of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa;

Aware that a standard basic level certificated proficiency level test will attract a Language Allowance and the ability to speak the three major languages would be an added advantage to those applying for recruitment or commissioning into the Army;

Also notes that language is the road map of a culture and tells where its people come from and where they are going as a quote from "the Status of Linguistics as a Science" by Sapir summarizes "Human beings as not living in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society";

Cognizant that Nigeria is home to languages numbering about 400 and that language gives insight into the personality and culture of a people, therefore such a local language policy proposed by the Nigerian Army infringes on the fundamental rights of the minorities not to be foisted with the linguistic and cultural hegemonies of major languages;

Further notes that contrary to the claim that "the Policy will foster esprit-de-corps and better communication with the populace to enhance information gathering, civil-military relations, increase understanding between Militaries when operating abroad and assist officers and soldiers to perform their duties professionally," it will in fact serve no purpose beyond fractionalization and marginalization in the Army;

Also cognizant that if, prior to undertaking this local language policy expedition, adequate reconnaissance was carried out to gather Intel, this expensive voyage in futility would have been avoided;

Equally notes that this situation, should it become a trend and continue unabated will in turn lead to discrimination and exclusion from employment opportunities, promotions and ambush of the legitimate aspirations of the overwhelming numbers of non-native speakers of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa in the Army;

Also aware that the Nigerian society is heterogeneous and as such, in contemplating policies, care must be taken by the Army hierarchy to steer discourse to what is integrating, progressive and amenable to ensure mass involvement in the national development and democratic processes rather than pandering to primordial or tribal biases;

Further aware that the policy flies in the face of an increasingly globalizing world where proficiency in an international language is the current inclination, because when we all use the same language, we have a common understanding of precisely what we mean and what is expected.

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Nigerian Army to continue with the practice of communicating in English language in a multi-lingual Army as it is one of the cardinal points of convergence for the Army, and so it should continue to adhere to this time honoured tradition;
- (ii) also urge the Chief of Army Staff to stop implementation of the Policy that seeks to compel non speakers of the three major Nigerian languages to learn them as it will give a head start to indigenous speakers of those languages, and is also discriminatory and inimical to the cohesion in the Army; and
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Army to interface with the Chief of Army Staff on the policy with a view to ensuring a stop to it and report back within four (4) weeks for further legislative action (*Hon. Abiante Awaji-Inombek Dagomie — Andoni-Opobo/Nkoro Federal Constituency and 1 other*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

Recognized and salutes the continuing sacrifice, courage and patriotism of the Nigerian Armed Forces in the various theaters of engagement, particularly against the Boko Haram insurgents in the North East Zone;

Noted the statement by the Spokesman of the Nigerian Army, Brig-Gen. Sani Usman that the Nigerian Army has given its personnel one year, that is by December, 2018, to learn and be proficient in the three major Nigerian languages of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa;

Aware that a standard basic level certificated proficiency level test will attract a Language Allowance and the ability to speak the three major languages would be an added advantage to those applying for recruitment or commissioning into the Army;

Also noted that language is the road map of a culture and tells where its people come from and where they are going as a quote from "the Status of Linguistics as a Science" by Sapir summarizes "Human beings as not living in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society";

Cognizant that Nigeria is home to languages numbering about 400 and that language gives insight into the personality and culture of a people, therefore such a local language policy proposed by the Nigerian Army infringes on the fundamental rights of the minorities not to be foisted with the linguistic and cultural hegemonies of major languages;

Further noted that contrary to the claim that "the Policy will foster esprit-de-corps and better communication with the populace to enhance information gathering, civil-military relations, increase understanding between Militaries when operating abroad and assist officers and soldiers to perform their duties professionally," it will in fact serve no purpose beyond fractionalization and marginalization in the Army;

Also cognizant that if, prior to undertaking this local language policy expedition, adequate reconnaissance was carried out to gather Intel, this expensive voyage in futility would have been avoided;

Equally noted that this situation, should it become a trend and continue unabated will in turn lead to discrimination and exclusion from employment opportunities, promotions and ambush of the legitimate aspirations of the overwhelming numbers of non-native speakers of Yoruba, Igbo and Hausa in the Army;

Also aware that the Nigerian society is heterogeneous and as such, in contemplating policies, care must be taken by the Army hierarchy to steer discourse to what is integrating, progressive and amenable to ensure mass involvement in the national development and democratic processes rather than pandering to primordial or tribal biases;

Further aware that the policy flies in the face of an increasingly globalizing world where proficiency in an international language is the current inclination, because when we all use the same language, we have a common understanding of precisely what we mean and what is expected.

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Nigerian Army to continue with the practice of communicating in English language in a multi-lingual Army as it is one of the cardinal points of convergence for the Army, and so it should continue to adhere to this time honoured tradition;
- (ii) also urge the Chief of Army Staff to stop implementation of the Policy that seeks to compel non speakers of the three major Nigerian languages to learn them as it will give a head start to indigenous speakers of those languages, and is also discriminatory and inimical to the cohesion in the Army; and
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Army to interface with the Chief of Army Staff on the policy with a view to ensuring a stop to it and report back within four (4) weeks for further legislative action (**HR. 187/2017**).

15 Consideration of Reports

(i) **Committee on Interior:**

That the House do consider the Report of the Committee on Interior on the Investigation into the Outsourcing of Issuance of Travel Documents, International Passports, Residence Permits and Border Surveillance and Patrol by the Ministry of Interior and Nigeria Immigration Service.

Order read deferred by leave of the House.

(ii) **Committee on Public Petitions:**

Report on the Petition by Egwu Arua Okoro:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do reconsider Recommendation (ii) of the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Egwu Arua Okoro against the Nigeria Customs Service for wrongful termination of his appointment and approve the recommendation therein" (*Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta — Ukwá East/Ukwá West Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Question that the House do resolve into the Committee of the Whole to consider the Report — Agreed to.

(HOUSE IN COMMITTEE)

(Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Recommendation:

“Restore him to what would have been his substantive rank as at 2011 when he would have statutorily retired” (*Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta — Ukwu East/Ukwu West Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report proceeding.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole re-considered Recommendation (ii) of the Report of the Committee on Public Petitions on the Petition by Egwu Arua Okoro against the Nigeria Customs Service for wrongful termination of his appointment and approved the Recommendation.

Question that the House do adopt the Report of the Committee of the Whole — Agreed to.

16 Adjournment

That the House do adjourn till Thursday, 30 November, 2017 at 11.00 a.m. (Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila — House Leader).

The House adjourned accordingly at 3.41 p.m.

Yussuff Sulaimon Lasun
Deputy Speaker

CORRIGENDA

- (i) In the *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 16 November, 2017, item No. 13 — **Consideration of Reports: (iii) Ad-hoc Committee to Investigate the Process of Digital (Broadcast) Switch Over in Nigeria**, page 940, *leave out* all the words in Recommendation (xiv) and *insert* as follows:

“That **Inview Technology Nigeria Limited** should be further investigated on the public procurement infractions observed during the investigation as well as status of funds generated and utilized”.

- (ii) In the *Votes and Proceedings* of Thursday, 23 November, 2017, item 18 — **Consideration of Reports: (i) Committee on Aids, Loans and Debt Management**, page 1,003, in line 3, *leave out* “2017” and *insert* “2018” and on page 1,004, **Recommendation (i)**, line 1, *leave out* the amount “\$492.4m and *insert* the amount “\$542.4m”.