LEAD DEBATE ON A BILL FOR AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TEA AND COFFEE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL TO DEVELOP TEA AND COFFEE GROWTH, PRODUCTION AND MARKETING AND OTHER MATTERS CONNECTED WITH

Sponsored by Senator Yusuf Abubakar Yusuf

Mr. President of the Senate, Distinguished colleagues I feel highly honoured to lead the debate on the general principles of the bill for an act for the establishment of National Tea and Coffee Development Council to develop *Tea and Coffee Growth, Production and Marketing in Nigeria and other matters connected herewith.*

This Bill was first read in this chamber on Tuesday, 25th April 2017 and its speedy passage will enhance a rapid economy diversification of the agricultural sector, enhance revenue to government and its related impact on the improvement of the life of our people in the affected state both socially and economically. There's no doubt that passage of this bill will improve the performance and the growth of the nation's economy, reduce the over dependence on oil export earnings so as to further exploit the country's vast agricultural potentials.

Some parts of the country are favourably endowed with suitable climate and soil condition that could be harnessed for commercial cultivation of coffee, while States like Taraba, Plateau, and Cross River in the South are favourable endowed with the suitable climate and soil conditions that could be harnessed for commercial cultivation of tea, especially around the Mambilla, Jos Plateau and Obudu Range.

It's regrettable that governments have not made any major impact in terms of active involvement and/or participating in tea and coffee growth, production and marketing sectors of the economy. The only government presence in the development of tea production could be placed to the mid 70's, when government entered into joint venture with some state governments and private entrepreneurs to set up a tea farm and factory in Taraba State. It is also instructive to observe that the New Nigerian Development Company Limited (NNDC) and the Adamawa State Government have since sold their equity shareholding in the above mentioned tea company and the only Government presence in the coffee development, is the establishment of Coffee Research Institute of Nigeria (CRIN), with its headquarters in Ibadan, Oyo State, with its branches spread across the country.

The East African Country of Kenya has for a long time been generating considerable foreign exchange earnings and has become pre-eminence in the committee of nations owing to its aggressive expansion of that country's vast growing potentials which opportunities, the areas around Kenya readily provide for Kenyan tea farmers. Nigeria could draw instructive and beneficial lessons from the Kenyan experience.

The first step to take towards realising this aspiration is to put in place a legal framework that will primarily aim at developing and encouraging the growth, manufacturing, processing and marketing of the tea and coffee across the country, with particular emphasis being placed on favourable endowed places with suitable climate and soil condition that could be harnessed for commercial cultivation of tea and coffee.

The National Tea and Coffee Development Council Bill 2017 which is already before the Senate seeks to amongst others establish an authority, that will be saddled with the responsibility of assisting farmers to set up out-growers, tea and coffee factory's and provide some with ready training in the latest tea and coffee technology as well as supply agricultural input in aid of tea and coffee growth and production in Nigeria.

The Council, instead of direct investment by entrepreneurs as in the current dispensation will provide the enabling environment for farmers etc., to imbibe the tea and coffee growing as small holder out growers so as to pool them together to set up full entrepreneurship and ultimately own tea and coffee factories in the value chain.

The Council will be the catalyst for tea and coffee growth and development by providing technical, managerial and horticultural extension services among other things.

The above Bill also seeks to confer on the National Tea and Coffee Development Authority powers to access funding from surcharges on importation of Coffee and Tea, credit and other funding assistance from local multilaterals or international organisations to tea and coffee farmers and also tea and coffee factories. It's expected that with the establishment of the council under this bill, a new era of reinvigorated tea and coffee production in Nigeria will be enthroned.

The tremendous benefits this will have on the local economy of tea and coffee producing areas, employment generation and by extension development of other productive sectors, such as tourism and wildlife conservation is better imagined.

I therefore implore all Distinguished Senators to embrace the underlining principles of the (NTDA) Bill which is directed at improving the future of our local farmers aiming at repositioning our economy and transforming same into a diversified and productive agriculturally based economy in line with the current administration economic policy. Only this, I strongly believe has the solution to Nigeria's overdependence on oil earnings.

The Bill is structured into six parts with 24 Sections,-

Part I

Sections 1 – 5

1. Establishment of National Tea & Coffee Development Council
2. Establishment and Composition of the Board
3 Supplementary provisions
4. Terms of office of the Board
5. Disqualification, Removal from Office, etc.

Part II

Sections 6 – 9

6. Functions and Powers of the Board
7. Directorate of the Council
8. Other Employees of the Council
9. Pension CAP 346 LFN

Part III

Sections 10 – 11

10. Functions of the Council
11. Powers of the Council

Part IV

Sections 12 – 17

12. Financial Provisions
13. Application of Funds
14. Receipt of Gift of Land etc.
15. Revenue, Income, Borrowing, Powers etc.
16. Account
17. Council's Report

Part V

Sections 19 – 23

19. Public Protection Officers Act
20. Notice of Summon or other documents
21. Indemnity
22. Supervision
23. Regulation

Part VI

Sections 24

24. Interpretations.

I urge you to support the second reading of this bill.

COMPENDIUM OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS ON THE BILL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TEA AND COFFEE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL TO DEVELOP TEA AND COFFEE GROWTH, PRODUCTION AND MARKETING IN NIGERIA AND OTHER CONNECT THEREWITH

In compliance with Order 77(3) of the Standing Orders of the Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, below is a summary of the anticipated recurrent and capital expenditure on the first twelve months immediately following the commencement of this Act.

TOTAL PROJECTS/ESTIMATES FOR THE RECURRENT AND CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE COUNCIL IN THE FIRST TWELVE MONTHS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING COMMENCEMENT

1.	Project Recurrent Expenditure (Salaries and Allowances of Personnel)	₦ 230,100,115.00
2.	Projected Recurrent Expenditure (Overhead) (Maintenance Management Cost of Office and other Contingency)	₦ 67,744,000.00
3.	Estimated Capital Expenditure (Office Accommodation, furniture etc	₦ 150,000,000.00
Total	**Total Project/ Estimated Cost for First year of commencement of the council**	**₦ 447,844,115.00**

The above compilation proffers a fair approximate of the financial implications for the establishment of the council in the first year immediately following commencement.