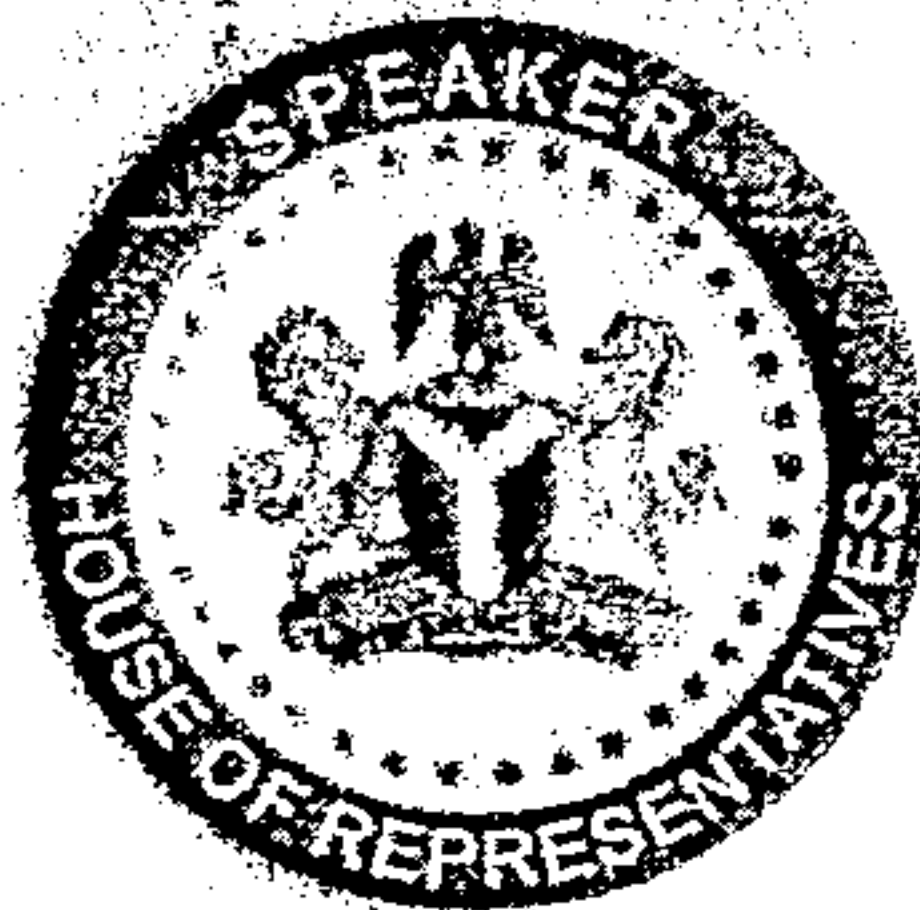




**SPEAKER**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Federal Republic of Nigeria

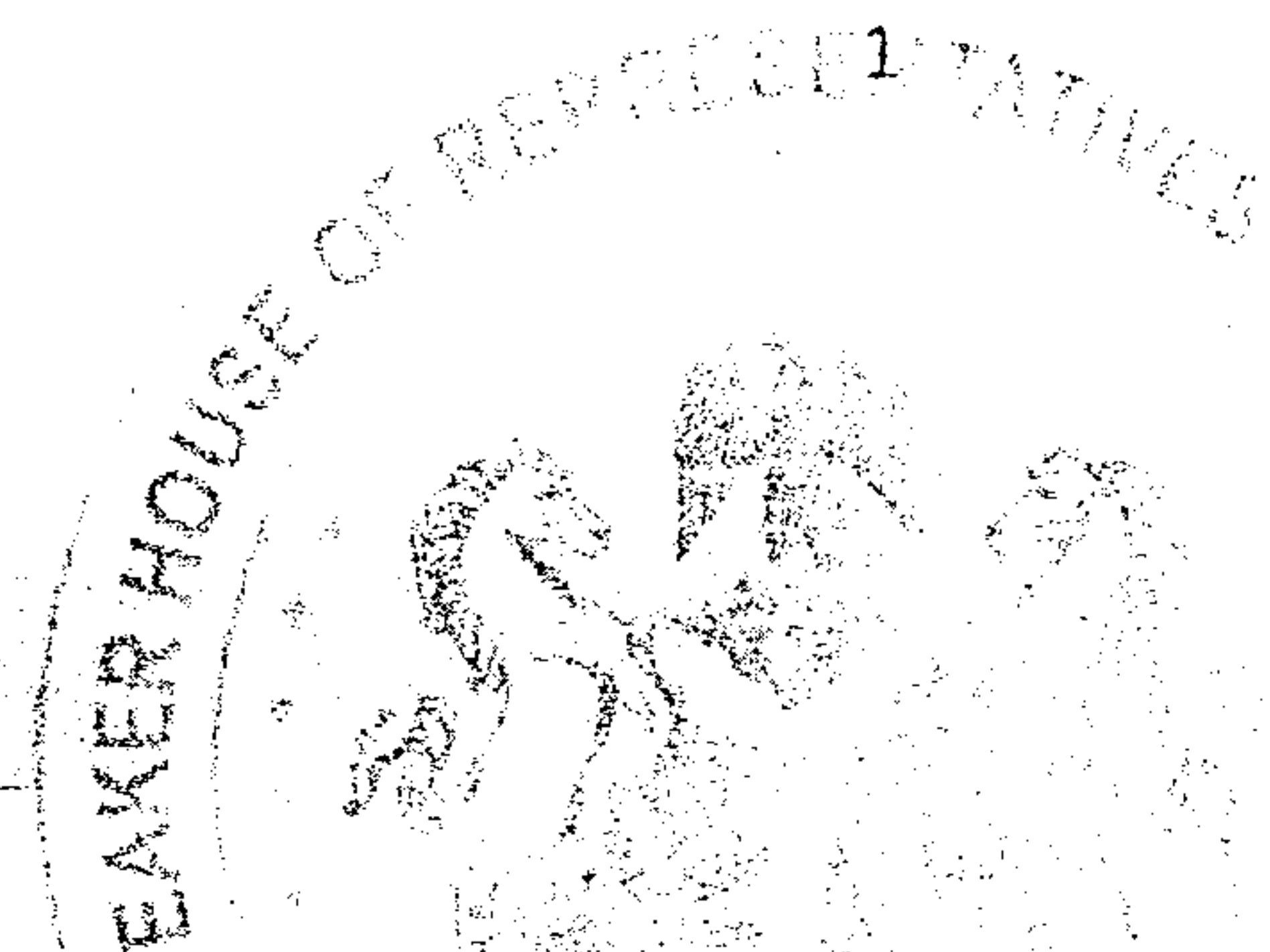
**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY, RT. HON. DOGARA YAKUBU, SPEAKER, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF THE RUNNING OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES/NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN NIGERIA ON AUGUST 14, 2015 AT TRANSCORP HILTON HOTEL, ABUJA.**

**PROTOCOLS:**

It is my pleasant duty to welcome you all to this inauguration ceremony of the Committee to conduct a Needs Assessment of the running of the House of Representatives/ National Assembly of Nigeria.

2. We are highly honoured with your presence and acceptance to serve in this Committee inspite of the shortness of notice and the likely difficulties that may be associated with your assignment. This is a clear demonstration of patriotism and a sense of duty and responsibility not only in support of our national development goals but also to society as a whole.

3. The Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 has vested the law making powers of the Federation in the National Assembly, consisting of the Senate and House Representatives. The Constitution further empowers the National Assembly to conduct investigations into the conduct of affairs of any person, authority, ministry, or government department charged or intended to be charged,



with the duty and responsibility for - executing or administering laws enacted by the National Assembly; disbursing or administering moneys appropriated or to be appropriated by the National Assembly. Of course these powers can be exercised only for the purpose of making laws and to correct defects in existing laws; and to expose corruption, inefficiency or waste in the execution or administration of laws within its legislative competence and in the disbursement or administration of funds appropriated by it. All these are encapsulated in the duty of the Legislature for Law making, Representation and Oversight.

4. I have set out these constitutional provisions in other to emphasise the role and responsibility assigned by the Constitution to the National Assembly. The legislature is at the vanguard of our democracy and a critical watchdog of the interests and aspirations of our people. If the legislature is undermined to the point that it becomes ineffective, our entire democratic experiment will face imminent danger of failure and destruction.

5. In order to perform these constitutionally assigned roles effectively and efficiently in any democracy worth its name, resources would have to be made available by the State. However, resources that may be made available would be based on the actual needs and not greed of the Legislature. There has been no study or assessment of what the legislature needs to perform optimally in Nigeria. We have all been making, at best, educated guesswork on whether the legislature is adequately funded or not. An appropriate Needs Assessment may well find out that the Legislature in Nigeria is overfunded or that it is underfunded. There should be an empirical and objective study to determine this.

6. It is as a result, that the House of Representatives made a commitment in its Legislative Agenda to set up an Independent Committee comprising - Civil Society Organisations (CSO's), independent Groups and professional bodies with the support of international development partners, to conduct a Needs Assessment of

- What would it cost to equip and service the Standing Committees, Special Committees and Ad-Hoc Committees of the National Assembly?

You should in the course of your work also make a comparative study of the cost of running legislatures in other relevant jurisdictions. These are only suggestions as you should feel free to adopt any methodology or *modus operandi* you deem fit in carrying out this assignment.

**In general, your Committee should judiciously determine the proper cost of running the legislative arm of government to enable it play its constitutionally assigned responsibilities.**

8. Members of the Committee include -
  1. Clement Nwankwo (PLAC) - Chairman
  2. National Institute for Legislative Studies (Secretariat)
  3. Representative of the Clerk to the National Assembly
  4. Austin Alegeh, NBA President or Representative
  5. Otunba Olufemi Deru (ICAN President) Or Representative