



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 6 February, 2024

1. The House met at 11.17 a.m. Mr Deputy Speaker read the Prayers.
2. The House recited the National Pledge.
3. **Votes and Proceedings**
Mr Deputy Speaker announced that he had examined and approved the *Votes and Proceedings* of Tuesday, 30 February, 2024.

The Votes and Proceedings was adopted by unanimous consent.

4. **Admittance into the Chamber**
Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do admit into the Chamber, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Budget and Economic Planning, the Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria, the Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) and their entourage for the purpose of Sectoral Debates on the Nation's economy, pursuant to Order Six, Rule 4 (1) (ix) and (2) of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives" (*Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

5. **Announcement**
 - (i) **Bereavement:**
Mr Deputy Speaker read a communication from Hon. Obiageli Lilian Orogbu (*Awka North/Awka South Federal Constituency*) announcing the demise of a former member, Hon. Anayo Nnebe (*Awka North/Awka South Federal Constituency, 2015 - 2019*), on Wednesday, 24 January, 2024.

A minute silence was observed in honour of the deceased.

- (ii) **Committee Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen:**
Mr Deputy Speaker announced the following Committee Chairmen and Deputy Chairmen:
 - (1) Hon. Dibiagwu Eugene Okechukwu — *Chairman, Committee, on Niger Delta Ministry.*

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---|--|
| (2) | Hon. Mallam Bukar Gana | — | <i>Deputy Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs.</i> |
| (3) | Hon. Dalyop Chollom | — | <i>Deputy Chairman, Committee on Christian Pilgrims Affairs.</i> |
| (4) | Hon. Peter Aniekwe | — | <i>Deputy Chairman, Committee on Lake Chad.</i> |

6. Petitions

- (i) A petition from Emmanuel Ibekwe and 1 other member of the Ohafia Connect, on behalf of the residents of the Ohafia, Abiriba and Nkporo Communities in Ohafia Local Government Area, Abia State, on alleged non-power-supply and Exorbitant Electricity Bills by the Enugu Electricity Distribution Company, was presented and laid by Hon. Ibe Okwana Osonwa Anochukwu (*Ohafia Federal Constituency*);
- (ii) A petition from Mr Aigamenkhue Edokpolo and 1 other member of Benin National Congress, on behalf of Mrs Agbede Ivie and 4 others, on alleged termination of their appointment from the service of Federal Ministry of Work, was presented and laid by Hon. Osawaru Billy Famous Adesuwa (*Orhionmwon/Uhunmwode Federal Constituency*);
- (iii) The following petitions were presented and laid by Hon. Jesse Okey-Joe Onuakalusi (*Oshodi/Isolo II Federal Constituency*):
- (a) Civil Society for Ethics and Values Development and Values Development Initiative, on alleged denial of promotion for Professors working at the National Initiative for Pharmaceutical Research and Development (NIPRD) by the Management of NIPRD;
- (b) Accurate Solicitors (Legal Practitioners), on behalf of Ponsel Aaron Miri and one other on alleged refusal to pay death benefit of Late Miri Jangnap Zwalchir by the Management of the ARM Pensions;
- (iv) A petition from M.C. Chambers (Legal Practitioners), on alleged abandonment of Aboh Mbaise Transmission Station by the EEDC, the Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC) and Transmission Company of Nigerian (TCN), was presented and laid by Hon. Mathew Nwogu (*Abo-Mbaise/Ngor Okpala Federal Constituency*).

Petitions referred to the Committee on Public Petitions.

7. Matter of Urgent Public Importance (Standing Order Eight, Rule 5)

Need for Government to Reduce the Cost of Living:

Hon. Ibrahim Ayokunle Isiaka (*Ifo/Ewekoro Federal Constituency*) introduced the matter and prayed the House to:

- (a) consider and approve the matter as one of urgent public importance; and
- (b) suspend Order Eight, Rule 5 (3) to allow debate on the matter forthwith.

Question that the matter be considered as one of urgent public importance — Agreed to.

Question that the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 5 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Need for Government to Reduce the Cost of Living:

The House:

Notes the recent skyrocketing and worsening cost of living across the globe with Nigerian citizens suffering the most;

Also notes the increasing expenses on housing, food, healthcare, education due largely to inflation rate which adversely affected the purchasing power, as the prices of goods and services continuously rise;

Regrets that the stagnant wages, salaries and lack of job opportunities have further exacerbated the financial and economic strain on families and individuals alike;

Concerned that the high cost of living has increased stress and anxiety levels in families, as they can longer make plans, save or invest for the future;

Commends the recent policy of Government to lift the ban on poultry, dairy and rice importation from other countries as panacea towards enhanced food security in the country;

Aware that the increase in cost of living has been further exacerbated by the high energy cost, with the attendant increase in poverty index and untold hardship on the Nigerian citizens.

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Executive Arm of Government to:
 - (a) liaise with critical stakeholders to immediately open up the national food reserve and to encourage the importation of grains, poultry products, meats, beverages, healthcare and pharmaceutical products from the top exporting countries in the world as a short-term measures;
 - (b) provide enabling goods for increased food production and improve distribution, including through ensuring adequate access to fertilizers and crop diversification;
- (ii) urge the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to facilitate supply chains as a vital tool to addressing the current cost of living price shocks;
- (iii) urge the Manufacturers, Producers, Middlemen, the Sellers of goods and services and other relevant stakeholders to be realistic in the aggressive manners at which incessant prices are placed exorbitantly on goods and services, especially, items that are not dependent on the foreign exchange (e.g. 100% of raw materials for cement are sourced locally);
- (iv) mandate the Leadership of the House to begin in earnest, the planned summit with the theme: “Security and Economic Development” (*Hon. Ibrahim Ayokunle Isiaka — Ifo/Ewekoro Federal Constituency*)

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted the recent skyrocketing and worsening cost of living across the globe with Nigerian citizens suffering the most;

Also noted the increasing expenses on housing, food, healthcare, education due largely to inflation rate which adversely affected the purchasing power, as the prices of goods and services continuously rise;

Regretted that the stagnant wages, salaries and lack of job opportunities have further exacerbated the financial and economic strain on families and individuals alike;

Concerned that the high cost of living has increased stress and anxiety levels in families, as they can no longer make plans, save or invest for the future;

Commended the recent policy of Government to lift the ban on poultry, dairy and rice importation from other countries as panacea towards enhanced food security in the country;

Aware that the increase in cost of living has been further exacerbated by the high energy cost, with the attendant increase in poverty index and untold hardship on the Nigerian citizens;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Executive Arm of Government to:
 - (a) liaise with critical stakeholders to immediately open up the national food reserve and to encourage the importation of grains, poultry products, meats, beverages, healthcare and pharmaceutical products from the top exporting countries in the world as a short-term measures,
 - (b) provide enabling goods for increased food production and improve distribution, including through ensuring adequate access to fertilizers and crop diversification;
- (ii) also urge the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) to facilitate supply chains as a vital tool to addressing the current cost of living price shocks;
- (iii) further urge the Manufacturers, Producers, Middlemen, the Sellers of goods and services and other relevant stakeholders to be realistic in the aggressive manners at which incessant prices are placed exorbitantly on goods and services, especially, items that are not dependent on the foreign exchange (e.g. 100% of raw materials for cement are sourced locally);
- (iv) mandate the Leadership of the House to begin in earnest, the planned summit with the theme: “Security and Economic Development” (HR.06/02/2024).

8. Presentation of Reports

(i) *Committee on Police Affairs:*

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Police Affairs on the issue from the Statutory Revenue Fund of the Nigeria Police Trust Fund the total sum of (₦57,014,287,531.92) Fifty-Seven Billion, Fourteen Million, Two Hundred and Eighty-Seven Thousand, Five Hundred and Thirty-One Naira, Ninety-Two Kobo, out of which the sum of (₦937,993,627.68) Nine Hundred and Thirty-Seven Million, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Three Thousand, Six Hundred and Twenty-Seven Naira, Sixty-Eight Kobo only, is for Personnel Expenditure, while the sum of (₦9,051,490,363.14) nine billion, fifty-one million, four hundred and ninety thousand, three hundred and sixty-three Naira, fourteen Kobo, only is for Overhead Expenditure while the sum of (₦9,989,483,990.82) nine billion, nine hundred and eighty-nine million, four hundred and eighty-three thousand, nine hundred and ninety Naira, eighty-two Kobo only, is for Recurrent Expenditure and the sum of (₦47,024,803,541.18) Forty-Seven Billion, Twenty-Four Million, Eight Hundred and Three Thousand, Five Hundred and Forty-One Naira, Eighteen Kobo only, is for Capital Expenditure for the year ended 31 December, 2023 (Hon. Abubakar Makki Yalleman — Mallam Madori/Kaugama Federal Constituency).

Agreed to.

Report laid.

(ii) Committee on Customs and Excise:

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do receive the Report of the Committee on Customs and Excise on the issue from the Statutory Revenue Fund of the Nigeria Customs and Excise, the total sum of (₦706, 434, 216, 877.66) Seven Hundred and Six Billion, Four Hundred and Thirty-Four Million, Two Hundred and Sixteen Thousand, Eight Hundred and Seventy-Seven Naira, Sixty-Six Kobo only, out of which the sum of (₦225,993,659,688.50k) Two Hundred and Twenty-Five Billion, Nine Hundred and Ninety-Three Million, Six Hundred and Fifty-Nine Thousand, Six Hundred and Eighty-Eight Naira, Fifty Kobo only, is for Personnel Cost, while the sum of (₦111,765,093,000.00) One Hundred and Eleven Billion, Seven Hundred and Sixty-Five Million, Ninety-Three Thousand Naira only, is for Overhead Costs, while the sum of (₦368,675,464,189.16) Three Hundred and Sixty-Eight Billion, Six Hundred and Seventy-Five Million, Four Hundred and Sixty-Four Thousand, One Hundred and Eighty-Nine Naira, Sixteen Kobo only, is for Capital Expenditure for the year ending 31 December, 2024 (Hon. Leke Joseph Abejide — Yagba East/Yagba West/Mopa Muro Federal Constituency).

Agreed to.

Report laid.

9. Sectoral Debate on the Nation's Economy

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do commence Sectoral Debate on the Nation's Economy, Pursuant to Order Seventeen, Rules 1(3) of the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives" (Hon. Julius Omozuanybo Ihonvbere — House Leader).

Agreed to.

10. Deputy Speaker's Introductory Remarks

The Hon. Deputy Speaker addressed the House as follows:

Protocol:

Esteemed Colleagues, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, today marks another significant chapter in the life of the 10th Assembly as we continue with the Sectoral Debates with the finance sector stakeholders. As outlined in our Legislative Agenda, the House is committed to engaging with all sectors towards identifying their needs and developing measures to address them. These engagements are also an important aspect of our constitutional mandate to exercise oversight over the executive branch to ensure the order and good governance of our country.

As we gather in this sectoral debate with the Central Bank Governor, the Chairman of the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS), the Minister of Budget and National Planning, and the Minister of Finance, it is imperative to recognise the urgency and importance of the agenda before us. We must also confront the stark realities of the economic, fiscal, and revenue challenges that our beloved nation, Nigeria, is currently facing.

In a world of complexities and uncertainties, the path to fiscal integrity is not just a choice but a necessity. It is the bedrock upon which the trust between the government and its people is built and the foundation that supports the robust architecture of our national economy. Fiscal integrity ensures transparency, accountability, and the prudent management of our nation's resources. It is our duty and responsibility to safeguard this, not just for the present generation but for the future ones that will inherit the outcomes of our decisions today.

Moreover, the essence of synergy cannot be overstated in our quest for economic stability and growth. The collaborative spirit we foster within this hallowed Chamber attests to the collective will and dedication of the House to steer our nation towards a brighter, more prosperous future. The interconnection between the Central Bank, the FIRS, the Ministry of Planning, and the Ministry of Finance embodies the holistic approach we must adopt to address the multifaceted challenges that confront us. Through synergy, we can align our strategies, consolidate our efforts, and amplify the impact of our initiatives.

In the face of global economic shifts and domestic challenges, it is clear that robust reform measures are not just beneficial but imperative. We are at a pivotal moment where the decisions we make and the policies we implement will impact the lives of millions of Nigerians. The reforms we envisage should not only address the immediate needs but also lay a resilient and dynamic framework that can adapt to future challenges and opportunities. These measures should stimulate growth, foster innovation, and uplift the lives of every Nigerian.

As we engage in this sectoral debate, let us remember that the eyes of our nation are upon us, looking with hope and expectation for outcomes that will reinforce the pillars of our economy, safeguard our fiscal integrity, and ensure a prosperous and inclusive future for all Nigerians. In the face of numerous daunting challenges facing our constituents, including hunger and worsening inflation, the role of the Parliament is not just of oversight but of active, visionary leadership. It is our responsibility to legislate, debate, and meticulously craft policies that will address these issues head-on. We are called upon to be the architects of reform and the voice of our people.

I thank our guests for your commitment and dedication to this noble, even if daunting, task. Let us proceed with the assurance that our collective efforts, insights, and wisdom will guide us towards realising our shared vision for a stronger, more resilient Nigeria.

Each of our guests will be given 10 minutes to address the Chamber, outlining the journey so far, their priorities and strategies for addressing the real and felt needs of Nigerians. The floor will subsequently be open for Members to pose questions, which I will moderate. I charge all of us to abide by our rules for decorum and conduct ourselves with the seriousness that this occasion requires of us.

Thank you, and may God bless the Federal Republic of Nigeria .

11. Presentations by Invited Speakers

On the invitation of Mr Speaker the following persons made oral presentations:

- | | | | |
|-------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| (i) | Chief Wale Edun | — | Minister of Finance |
| (ii) | Senator Abubakar Atiku Bagudu | — | Minister of Budget and Economic Planning |
| (iii) | Olayemi Cardoso | — | Governor, Central Bank of Nigeria |
| (iv) | Zacch Adedeji | — | Chairman, Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) |

(See details in the Official Report of Proceedings)

12. Adjournment

That the House do adjourn till Wednesday, 7 February, 2024 at 11.00 a.m. (Hon. Julius Omozuanvbo Ihonvbere — House Leader).

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.32 p.m.

Benjamin Okezie Kalu
Deputy Speaker

CORRIGENDUM

In the *Votes and Proceedings* of Tuesday, 30 January, 2024, page 1881, item 9 (iv), *leave out* all the words in the Prayer (iii) and *insert* as follows:

“mandate the Committees on Healthcare Services, and Water Resources to undertake a holistic survey of these communities and also investigate the nature of the boreholes sunk in the affected communities to ascertain whether they meet standard procedures and guidelines”
(*Hon. Kama Nkemkanma — Ohaozara/Onicha/Ivo Federal Constituency*).

Benjamin Okezie Kalu
Deputy Speaker