



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Tuesday, 10 October, 2023

1. The House met at 11.33 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 Wednesday, 5 October, 2022.

The Votes and Proceedings was adopted by unanimous consent.

4. **Message**
Mr Deputy Speaker read a message from the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria:



PRESIDENT,
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

30 August, 2023

Rt. Honourable Abbas Tajudeen
Speaker of the House of Representatives,
National Assembly Complex,
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja.

**CONFIRMATION OF CHAIRMAN AND GOVERNING BOARD
OF NIGER DELTA DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

In compliance with the provisions of section 2 (2) of the Niger Delta Development Commission (Establishment, etc.) Act, I am pleased to present the underlisted seventeen (17) nominees for the consideration of the House of Representatives for the positions of Chairman and members of the Governing Board of the Niger Delta Development Commission.

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Zone/State</i>
1.	Mr Chiedu Ebie	Chairman	Delta
2.	Dr Samuel Ogbuku	MD/CEO	Bayelsa
3.	Mr Boma Iyaye	ED (Finance and Admin	Rivers
4.	Mr Victor Antai	ED (Projects)	Akwa-Ibom
5.	Hon. Otito Atikase	ED (Corporate Services)	Ondo
6.	Sen. Dimaro Denyanbofa	State Representative	Bayelsa
7.	Mr Abasi Ndikan Nkono	State Representative	Akwa-Ibom
8.	Rt Hon. Monday Iqbuya	State Representative	Delta
9.	Chief Tony Okocha	State Representative	Rivers
10.	Hon Patrick Aisowieren	State Representative	Edo
11.	Mr Kyrian C. Uchegbu	State Representative	Imo
12.	Victor Kolade Akinio	State Representative	Ondo
13.	Chief Dimaba Eruba	State Representative	Abia
14.	Rt Hon. Orok Otu Duke	State Representative	Cross River
15.	Hon. Nick Wende	Zonal Representative	North Central
16.	Hon. Namdas Abdulrazak	Zonal Representative	North East
17.	Sen. (Dr) Ibrahim Abdullahi Gobir	Zonal Representative	North West

While I look forward to the usual expeditious consideration of the House, please accept, Rt. Honourable Speaker, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Bola Ahmed Tinubu

Screening Committee for Governing Board Members of Niger Delta Development Commission:

Mr Deputy Speaker named the following membership of the Screening Committee:

(1)	Hon. Ibori-Suenu Erhiatake	—	<i>Chairman</i>
(2)	Hon. Leko Jafaru Gambo	—	<i>Deputy Chairman</i>
(3)	Hon. Julius Ihonvbere	—	<i>Member</i>
(4)	Hon. Abdullahi Ibrahim Ali	—	<i>Member</i>
(5)	Hon. Chinda Kingsley	—	<i>Member</i>
(6)	Hon. Madaki Aliyu Sanni	—	<i>Member</i>
(7)	Hon. Usman Bello Kumo	—	<i>Member</i>
(8)	Hon. Onanuga Adewunmi Oriyomi	—	<i>Member</i>
(9)	Hon. Isa Ali J.C	—	<i>Member</i>
(10)	Hon. Ozodinobi George	—	<i>Member</i>

5. Announcement

Bereavement:

Mr Deputy Speaker read a communication from Hon. Joseph Nwobasi (*Ezza North/Ishielu Federal Constituency*) announcing the demise of Hon. Felix Mgbada, a former Member (*Ezza North/Ishielu Federal Constituency, 1993 - 1994*), who passed away on 10 August, 2023 at the age of 73.

6. Petitions

- (i) Hon. Uchenna Harris Okonkwo (*Idemilli North/Idemilli South Federal Constituency*) presented and laid a petition from Dr. Emenike Onwutalu, on alleged mysterious death and burial of Ibe Maxwell Onyekes by Al-Halif Steel Company in Dubai;

- (ii) Hon. Paul Sunday Nnamchi (*Enugu East/Isuzo Federal Constituency*) presented and laid a petition from Mike J. K. Tiemo and 2 Others, on behalf of Niger Delta Indigenes and the Federal Government of Nigeria, on alleged defrauding of over \$7 Billion compensation fee for Bonga Oil Spill by Shell Exploration and Production Company Limited;
- (iii) Hon. Chris Nwonta (*Ukwa East/Ukwa West Federal Constituency*) presented and laid a petition from Moyesoluwa Oladayo, on alleged negligence and outright denial of medical care for Late Greatness Olorunfemi by the Chief Medical Director and Management of National General Hospital, Maitama, Abuja;
- (iv) Hon. Martins Esin Etim (*Mbo/Okobo/Oron/Udung Uko/Urue Federal Constituency*) presented and laid a petition from Joseph A Andrew, on alleged wrongful termination of his appointment by Nigerian National Petroleum Company (NNPC) Limited;
- (v) Hon. Auwalu Abdu Gwalabe (*Katagum Federal Constituency*) presented and laid a petition from A. B. Eluburuike LP (Legal Practitioners and Consultants), on behalf of Mahmood Bidawa Hussani, on alleged removal of his name from the list of employees of Federal College of Education (Technical), Asaba, Delta State.

Petitions referred to the Committee on Public Petitions.

7. Matters of Urgent Public Importance (Standing Order Eight, Rule 4)

- (i) ***The Spread of Fungal Disease Affecting Ginger Production in Southern Kaduna:***
Hon. Magaji Amos Gwamna Abel (*Jaba/Zangon Kataf Federal Constituency and 3 Others*) 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 4 (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 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

The Spread of Fungal Disease Affecting Ginger Production in Southern Kaduna:

The House:

Notes that ginger is a high-value cash crop that can generate significant income for farmers and has a strong demand in both domestic and international markets, making it a profitable crop for cultivation;

Also notes the medicinal value of ginger became handy during the COVID-19; ginger was used as both preventive and curative measures to the pandemic, and is still being used by many families across the world for different purposes;

Further notes that the demand for ginger is increasing globally and farmers in Zangon Kataf, Jaba and other Local Governments in Southern Kaduna have contributed to the export market and earn foreign exchange for the country;

Aware that Zangon Kataf, Jaba and some other Local Government Areas like Jama'a, Kachia, Kagarko in Kaduna State are the center of ginger farming where bulk buyers converge from different part of the country and the entire world for their purchase, as the ginger from these areas is considered to be the world's best;

Also aware that the disease which broke out in July 2023, has continued to destroy the crops while some farmers, in combatting this disease, that is caused by various fungal pathogens had applied insecticides/pesticides but their effort did not yield any meaningful results:

Concerned that the fungal disease affecting ginger production in southern parts of Kaduna State has become an epidemic, which has caused the farmers to lose over ₦10 billion worth of ginger sales and the disease is still rapidly destroying their crops;

Also concerned that the situation has affected its yields after sinking billions of Naira; from loans through Banks, Cooperative societies, well spirited individuals, with the promise that these loans will be returned after harvest;

Disturbed that many families depend on Ginger for their livelihood and education of their children, therefore, with the present situation, many children may not be able to return to school, and this may affect the export earnings for the country.

Worried that in the next farming season, it would be very difficult for farmers to get ginger seedlings;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to urgently ensure that adequate measures are put in place to combat and prevent the fungal disease affecting ginger farming in southern Kaduna;
- (ii) call on the Executive Arm of Government to establish Ginger Research Institute and a branch of Root Crops Research Institute in Zango Kataf/Jaba Federal Constituency;
- (iii) also urge the Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Nigeria and other relevant government agencies to urgently support the farmers for the immediate and long term losses;
- (iv) further urge the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to urgently consider the need to see to the distribution of improved ginger seedlings to the affected farmers;
- (v) mandate the Committees on Agricultural Institutions, Agricultural Production and Services, Finance, Banking, Commerce, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (*Hon. Amos Gwamna Magaji — Jaba/Zangon Kataf Federal Constituency and Four Others*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that ginger is a high-value cash crop that can generate significant income for farmers and has a strong demand in both domestic and international markets, making it a profitable crop for cultivation;

Also noted the medicinal value of ginger became handy during the COVID-19; ginger was used as both preventive and curative measures to the pandemic, and is still being used by many families across the world for different purposes;

Further noted that the demand for ginger is increasing globally and farmers in Zangon Kataf,

Jaba and other Local Governments in Southern Kaduna have contributed to the export market and earn foreign exchange for the country;

Aware that Zangon Kataf, Jaba and some other Local Government Areas like Jama'a, Kachia, Kagarko in Kaduna State are the center of ginger farming where bulk buyers converge from different part of the country and the entire world for their purchase, as the ginger from these areas is considered to be the world's best;

Also aware that the disease which broke out in July 2023, has continued to destroy the crops while some farmers, in combatting this disease, that is caused by various fungal pathogens had applied insecticides/pesticides but their effort did not yield any meaningful results:

Concerned that the fungal disease affecting ginger production in southern parts of Kaduna State has become an epidemic, which has caused the farmers to lose over ₦10 billion worth of ginger sales and the disease is still rapidly destroying their crops;

Also concerned that the situation has affected its yields after sinking billions of Naira; from loans through Banks, Cooperative societies, well spirited individuals, with the promise that these loans will be returned after harvest;

Disturbed that many families depend on Ginger for their livelihood and education of their children, therefore, with the present situation, many children may not be able to return to school, and this may affect the export earnings for the country.

Worried that in the next farming season, it would be very difficult for farmers to get ginger seedlings;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to urgently ensure that adequate measures are put in place to combat and prevent the fungal disease affecting ginger farming in southern Kaduna;
 - (ii) call on the Executive Arm of Government to establish Ginger Research Institute and a branch of Root Crops Research Institute in Zango Kataf/Jaba Federal Constituency;
 - (iii) also urge the Ministry of Finance, Central Bank of Nigeria and other relevant government agencies to urgently support the farmers for the immediate and long term losses;
 - (iv) further urge the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to urgently consider the need to see to the distribution of improved ginger seedlings to the affected farmers;
 - (v) mandate the Committees on Agricultural Institutions, Agricultural Production and Services, Finance, Banking, Commerce, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (**HR. 223/10/2023**).
- (ii) ***Devastating Flood Disaster in Some Communities in Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State:***
Hon. Avia Musa Agah (*Bassa /Jos North 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 4 (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 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Devastating Flood Disaster in Some Communities in Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State:

The House:

Notes with sadness, the unfortunate flood disaster which occurred on Sunday, 16 September, 2023, due to torrential downpours affecting five Communities in Jos North Local Government Areas;

Also notes that the affected communities are — Rikkos, Dilimi, Yelwa, Ungwa Rogo and Ungwa Rimi which are mostly traders who depend on their daily businesses for survival have an estimated population of over 30,000 residents;

Concerned that the torrential downpour lasted for several hours resulting to flooding that claimed the life of one resident and destroyed over 150 houses and properties worth Billions of Naira;

Worried that the affected Communities whose means of livelihood have been cut off are now exposed to untold hardships resulting to hunger, ill health, abject poverty and lack of accommodation, etc.;

Also worried that the only bridge linking one of the Communities to Jos metropolis has been washed away thereby denying them access to the city;

Resolves to:

- (i) observe a minute silence in honour of the deceased;
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management and Poverty Alleviation and National Emergency Management Agency to as a matter of urgency provide relief materials to the affected Communities;
- (iii) mandate Committee on Emergency and Disaster Preparedness to undertake an on the spot visit to the affected communities with a view to proffering futuristic solutions (*Hon. Avia Musa Agah — Bassa/Jos North Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted with sadness, the unfortunate flood disaster which occurred on Sunday, 16 September, 2023, due to torrential downpours affecting five Communities in Jos North Local Government Areas;

Also noted that the affected communities are — Rikkos, Dilimi, Yelwa, Ungwa Rogo and Ungwa Rimi which are mostly traders who depend on their daily businesses for survival have an estimated population of over 30,000 residents;

Concerned that the torrential downpour lasted for several hours resulting to flooding that

claimed the life of one resident and destroyed over 150 houses and properties worth Billions of Naira;

Worried that the affected Communities whose means of livelihood have been cut off are now exposed to untold hardships resulting to hunger, ill health, abject poverty and lack of accommodation, etc.;

Also worried that the only bridge linking one of the Communities to Jos metropolis has been washed away thereby denying them access to the city;

Resolved to:

- (i) observe a minute silence in honour of the deceased;
- (ii) urge the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management and Poverty Alleviation and National Emergency Management Agency to as a matter of urgency provide relief materials to the affected Communities;
- (iii) mandate Committee on Emergency and Disaster Preparedness to undertake an on the spot visit to the affected communities with a view to proffering futuristic solutions (**HR. 224/10/2023**).

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the House do suspend Order Eight, Rule 4 (4) to enable it take more than two matters of urgent public importance” (*Hon. Adewale Morufu Adebayo — Irepodun/Orolu/Olorunda/Osogbo Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(iii) ***Need to Avert Further Clashes in Irepodun/Orolu Local Government Areas in Osun State:*** Hon. Adewale Morufu Adebayo (*Irepodun/Orolu/Olorunda/Osogbo 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 4 (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 4 (3) to enable it debate the matter forthwith — Agreed to.

Need to Avert Further Communal Clashes in Irepodun and Orolu Local Government Areas in Osun State:

The House:

Notes that the Ilobu and Ifon communities in Osun State have been experiencing communal crisis that have caused significant tensions and conflicts among the residents;

Also notes that these crises have led to loss of lives, destruction of properties and displacement of people, creating a sense of fear and insecurity in the affected communities;

Aware that the unclear and disputed boundaries between the two communities always lead to communal crises over claim of land ownership and usage rights;

Worried that several people have been reportedly killed, properties worth millions of naira have been destroyed and several houses were set ablaze in the communal clash;

Also worried that as a result of the dispute, residents of the towns have abandoned their homes and moved to neighboring communities to avoid being killed;

Resolves to:

- (i) condemn the barbaric killing of innocent people as well as the destruction of their properties and observe a minute silence in honour of the departed souls;
- (ii) commend the Governor of Osun State for his prompt response to the situation;
- (iii) urge the Inspector General of Police to thoroughly investigate the immediate and remote causes of the unfortunate incident, and bring all perpetrators to book;
- (iv) also urge the Inspector General of Police to immediately build a police station each of the community and direct the State Commissioner of Police to increase the number of roadblocks to all adjoining boundaries and borders in the affected areas to strengthen security operations in the affected communities and deploy more armed police personnel to avert re-occurrence and escalation of the crisis;
- (v) further urge the National Boundary Commission to liaise with the State Government to intervene in accordance with the boundary delineation guidelines for a peaceful resolution on the boundary dispute;
- (vi) still urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to send relief materials for the victims;
- (vii) mandate the Committees on Police Affairs, and Special duties to ensure compliance and submit report within four (4) weeks (*Hon. Adewale Morufu Adebayo — Irepodun/Orolu/Olorunda/Osogbo Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the Ilobu and Ifon communities in Osun State have been experiencing communal crisis that have caused significant tensions and conflicts among the residents;

Also noted that these crises have led to loss of lives, destruction of properties and displacement of people, creating a sense of fear and insecurity in the affected communities;

Aware that the unclear and disputed boundaries between the two communities always lead to communal crises over claim of land ownership and usage rights;

Worried that several people have been reportedly killed, properties worth millions of naira have been destroyed and several houses were set ablaze in the communal clash;

Also worried that as a result of the dispute, residents of the towns have abandoned their homes and moved to neighboring communities to avoid being killed;

Resolved to:

- (i) condemn the barbaric killing of innocent people as well as the destruction of their properties and observe a minute silence in honour of the departed souls;
- (ii) commend the Governor of Osun State for his prompt response to the situation;
- (iii) urge the Inspector General of Police to thoroughly investigate the immediate and remote causes of the unfortunate incident, and bring all perpetrators to book;
- (iv) also urge the Inspector General of Police to immediately build a police station each of the community and direct the State Commissioner of Police to increase the number of roadblocks to all adjoining boundaries and borders in the affected areas to strengthen security operations in the affected communities and deploy more armed police personnel to avert re-occurrence and escalation of the crisis;
- (v) further urge the National Boundary Commission to liaise with the State Government to intervene in accordance with the boundary delineation guidelines for a peaceful resolution on the boundary dispute;
- (vi) still urge the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to send relief materials for the victims;
- (vii) mandate the Committees on Police Affairs, and Special duties to ensure compliance and submit report within four (4) weeks (**HR. 225/10/2023**).

8. Presentation of Bills

The following Bills were read the *First Time*:

- (1) Federal College of Education, Kamba, Kebbi State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.549).
- (2) Federal Medical Centres Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB. 550).
- (3) National institute of Fisheries and Aquaculture Studies, Abigi, Ogun State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.551).
- (4) Federal College of Nursing and Midwifery, Awa-Ijebu, Ogun State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.552).
- (5) Federal Cancer Research and Treatment Centre, Asa, Kwara State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.553).
- (6) Federal College of Entrepreneurship and Skill Acquisition, Ilorin West, Kwara State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.554).
- (7) National Prosecution Management Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.555).
- (8) Nigerian Agricultural Promotion Council Bill, 2023 (HB. 556).
- (9) Labour Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.557).
- (10) Child Rights and Welfare Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.558).
- (11) Criminal Code Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.559).

- (12) National Agriculture Commodity and Price Control Board (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.560).
- (13) Bitumen Development Commission (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.561).
- (14) Central Bank of Nigeria Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.562).
- (15) Nigerian Ports Authority Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.563).
- (16) Nigerian Social Insurance Trust Fund Act(Amendment)Bill, 2023 (HB.564).
- (17) Psychiatric Hospitals Management Board Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.565).
- (18) Small Scale Enterprises Development Agency Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.566).
- (19) Minimum Qualification for Patent and Proprietary Medicine Vendors Bill, 2023 (HB.567).
- (20) Examination Malpractices Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.568).
- (21) Legal Aid Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.569).
- (22) Army Colour (Prohibition of Use) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.570).
- (23) Investment and Securities Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.571).
- (24) Federal College of Agriculture, Mbatie, Buruku, Benue State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.572).
- (25) National Oil Spill Detection and Response Agency Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.573).
- (26) Chartered Institute of Professional Printers of Nigeria (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.574) .
- (27) National Park Service Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.575).
- (28) Central Bank of Nigeria Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.576).
- (29) Dishonoured Cheques Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.577).
- (30) National Institute for Information Communication Technology, Suleja (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.578).
- (31) Standards Organisation of Nigeria Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.579).
- (32) Counterfeit Medical Products, Fake Drugs and Wholesome Processed Foods (Prohibition and Control) Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.580).
- (33) Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.581).
- (34) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Alteration) Bill, 2023 (HB.582).
- (35) Nigerian Institute for Trypanosomiasis and Chocerciasis Agency (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.583) .

9. Presentation of Report***Ad-hoc Committee to Convene a Legislative Summit on Students Loans and Access to Higher Education in Nigeria:***

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do receive the Report of the *Ad-hoc* Committee to Convene a Legislative Summit on Students Loans and Access to Higher Education in Nigeria (HR.43/07/2023)" (*Hon. Terseer Ugbor — Kwande/Ushongo Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

Report laid.

10. Consolidation of Bills

Motion made and Question proposed, "That a Bill for an Act to Amend the Armed Forces Act, Cap. A20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Provide for the Appointment of the Chief of Defence Staff and for Related Matters (HB. 07); and a Bill for an Act to Amend the Armed Forces Act, Cap. A20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Provide for the engagement as Consultants of Senior Compulsorily Retired Officers of the Nigerian Armed Forces to provide Training and Guidance to Serving Officers and for Related Matter (HB. 13) be now consolidated (*Hon. Waive Ejiroghene Francis — Ughelli North/Ughelli South/Udu Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

11. A Bill for an Act to Amend the Nigerian Steel Development Act, Cap. N134, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and for Related Matters (HB. 36) — Second Reading

Order read; deferred by leave of the House.

12. Reconsideration of Outstanding Bills from Preceding Assembly

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that pursuant to Order Twelve, Rule 16 of the Standing Orders of the House, Bills passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence for which no concurrence was made or negatived or passed by the Senate and forwarded to the House for which no concurrence was made or negatived or which were passed by the National Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the Assembly, the House may resolve that such Bill, upon being re-gazetted or clean copies circulated, be re-considered in the Committee of the Whole without being commenced *de-novo*;

Also notes that the under-listed Bills were passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the last Assembly:

- (i) ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (Ratification and Enforcement) Bill, 2023 (HB.314),
- (ii) Federal Roads Authority Bill, 2023 (HB.288),
- (iii) National Transport Commission Bill, 2023 (HB.306),
- (iv) Federal University of Agriculture, Mpu Bill, 2023 (HB.308),
- (v) National Postgraduate College of Medical Laboratory Science Bill, 2023 (HB.310),
- (vi) Armed Forces Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.311),

- (vii) Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps Act (Amendment) Bill 2023 (HB.312),
- (viii) Nigeria Police Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.313),
- (ix) Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.315),
- (x) Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.316),
- (xi) Nigerian Peace Corps (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB 482),
- (xii) Federal College of Education, Mutu Biyu Taraba State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.494),
- (xiii) Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.171),
- (xiv) Traditional Complementary and Alternative Medicine Council of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.473),
- (xv) Federal University of Sports, Afuze, Edo State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.476),
- (xvi) Federal School of Nursing and Midwifery, Sobe, Edo State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.477),
- (xvii) Nigerian Medical Research Council (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.470),
- (xviii) National Ethics and Values Compliance Agency (Establishment Bill, 2023 (HB. 528),
- (xix) Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.500), and
- (xx) Federal Medical Centre, Sabon-Gida-Ora, Edo State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.478);

Aware that the Bills were re-gazetted as HB. 314, HB.288, HB.306, HB.308, HB.310, HB.311, HB.312, HB.313, HB.315, HB.316, HB.494, HB.211, HB.171, HB.473, HB.476, HB.477, HB.470, HB.500, HB.528, and HB.478 read the first time, respectively;

Resolves to:

Commit the Bills to the Committee of the Whole for consideration (*Hon. Waive Ejiroghene Francis — Ughelli North/Ughelli South/Udu Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Amendment Proposed:

Leave out the following Bills, on the list (HB. 314), (HB. 494) and (HB.478) (*Hon. Waive Ejiroghene Francis — Ughelli North/Ughelli South/Udu Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that pursuant to Order Twelve, Rule 16 of the Standing Orders of the House, Bills passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the Senate for concurrence for which no concurrence was made or negatived or passed by the Senate and forwarded to the House for which no concurrence was made or negatived or which were passed by the National Assembly and forwarded to the President

for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the Assembly, the House may resolve that such Bill, upon being re-gazetted or clean copies circulated, be re-considered in the Committee of the Whole without being commenced *de-novo*;

Also noted that the under-listed Bills were passed by the preceding Assembly and forwarded to the President for assent but for which assent or withholding thereof was not communicated before the end of the tenure of the last Assembly:

- (i) Federal Roads Authority Bill, 2023 (HB.288),
- (ii) National Transport Commission Bill, 2023 (HB.306),
- (iii) Federal University of Agriculture Mpu Bill, 2023 (HB.308),
- (iv) National Postgraduate College of Medical Laboratory Science Bill, 2023 (HB.310),
- (v) Armed Forces Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.311),
- (vi) Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps Act (Amendment) Bill 2023 (HB.312),
- (vii) Nigeria Police Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.313),
- (viii) Economic and Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.315),
- (ix) Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act (Amendment) Bill, 2023 (HB.316),
- (x) Nigerian Peace Corps (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB 482),
- (xi) Federal College of Horticulture, Okigwe (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.171),
- (xii) Traditional Complementary and Alternative Medicine Council of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.473),
- (xv) Federal University of Sports, Afuze, Edo State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.476),
- (xiii) Federal School of Nursing and Midwifery, Sobe, Edo State (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.477),
- (xiv) Nigerian Medical Research Council (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (HB.470),
- (xv) National Ethics and Values Compliance Agency (Establishment Bill, 2023 (HB. 528), and
- (xvi) Nigerian Institute of Transport Technology Act (Repeal and Enactment) Bill, 2023 (HB.500);

Aware that the Bills were re-gazetted as HB. 288, HB. 306, HB. 308, HB. 310, HB. 311, HB. 312, HB. 313, HB. 315, HB. 316, HB. 211, HB. 171, HB. 473, HB. 476, HB. 477, HB. 470, HB. 500, and HB. 528 read the first time, respectively;

Resolved to:

Commit the Bills to the Committee of the Whole for consideration.

Agreed to.

13. Reconstruction of Federal Highways in Edo State

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the federal highways in Edo State are in poor condition, causing concern for daily motorists. These major highways connect the South-South to parts of the South East, South West, and Northern regions;

Also notes that the State serves as a transit point or drive-through for travellers, connected to the East via Ewu/Uronigbe/Agbor/Asaba roads, the West via Uzebba-Ifon/Ofosu/Okada/Ovia roads, and the North via Auchi/Ekpoma/Benin and Afuze/Sabongidda Ora/Sobe roads;

Observes that the state is facing serious threats of being cut off from the rest of the country, causing significant economic erodiment, as several failed portions on various routes have become a nightmare for travellers;

Aware that the roads in the State is strategically located between the South, East, West, and Northern regions, collectively produce over 45% of agricultural produce and are the highest producer of granulated cassava;

Also aware that the roads serve as major gateways to Edo State Government-owned Universities, including Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Federal Polytechnic Auchi, College of Education, Igueben, and University of Benin, providing knowledge and sustainable future endeavours;

Worried that the road gradual degradation and abandonment over the years is causing commercial buses and motorcyclists to abandon it for alternative routes, this has caused widespread dissatisfaction;

Concerned that the deplorable state of the road has caused chaos and insecurity, leading to avoidable deaths through armed robbery, kidnappings, accidents, and traffic jams, imposing inconveniences and danger to communities and the state;

Resolves to:

- (i) mandate the Committee on Works to liaise with the Federal Ministry of Works, Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) and the Ministry of Niger Delta to come up with a workable modality that will ensure the speedy construction of the roads; and
- (ii) also mandate the Committees on Works, and Legislative Compliance to ensure implementation and report within four(4) weeks (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — Owan East/Owan West Federal Constituency and 8 Others*)

Agreed to.

(HR. 226/10/2023).

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

14. Need to Address the Impact of the Failing Naira against the Dollar and other Currencies on the Nigerian Economy

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that in June 2023, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmad Tinubu through the Central Bank of Nigeria announced changes to the country's foreign exchange market, that is, the foreign currencies can now be bought and sold at rates determined by the market and not by the central bank;

Also notes that the President's intention is to allow market forces to determine naira value, but the alarming exchange rate has impacted Nigeria's economy, causing untold hardship due to increased demand for dollars and a dollar shortage;

Aware that about 90% of Nigeria's total export earnings are from oil, which is the mainstay of the country's economy, but changes in the price of oil around the world have a big impact on the country's foreign exchange market, this explains why the naira has continued to depreciate;

Recognizes that Nigeria's foreign exchange inflows are lagging despite unification in June, with high demand for foreign currency and limited access to official markets incentivizing black market purchases, the Naira has lost a greater percent of its value against the dollar, falling from ₦778.602/\$ as of September 26, 2023, and nearly ₦1000/\$ at the parallel market, making it the first time Nigeria has liberalised the foreign exchange market;

Worried about inflation and the cost of living, depreciating Naira makes imported goods more expensive, leading to higher inflation rates. This increased cost of living disproportionately affects the most vulnerable citizens, as they struggle to afford basic necessities, which are now glaring across the country;

Also worried about the reduction in investment, as the value of the Naira continues to lose value and depreciates against the dollar and other foreign currencies, foreign investors may be deterred from investing in Nigeria, fearing potential currency losses, which is capable of stunting economic growth and hindering the creation of new job opportunities for unemployed Nigerian youth;

Aware that a weaker and depreciating Naira could increase Nigeria's external debt servicing costs, potentially reducing government spending on critical sectors like healthcare and education;

Also aware that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) frequently uses its foreign reserves to stabilise the naira, but this can deplete its reserves, making the country vulnerable to economic shocks;

Cognizant that addressing Nigeria's financial challenges requires collective responsibility from all stakeholders, including Parliament, which has been the voice of the common man;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Central Bank of Nigeria to implement monetary policy adjustments to stabilise the currency, address speculative activities in the forex market, and increase the withdrawal limit of the naira to reduce the pressure on dollars and other foreign currencies;
- (ii) also urge the Executive Arm of Government to formulate policies and structural Reforms to reduce corruption and promote economic diversification within the nation's economy;
- (iii) further urge the Executive Arm of Government to promote exportation and reduce importation by enhancing foreign investors' Confidence on its Fiscal and Monetary Policies;
- (iv) mandate the Committees on Banking Regulations and National Security and Intelligence to interface with the Central Bank of Nigeria with the purpose of initiating compliance strategies; and
- (v) also mandate the Committee on Banking Regulation to investigate the use of US Dollars and other foreign currencies as legal tender for domestic transactions in Nigeria (*Hon. Ismaila*

Haruna Dabo — Owan East/Owan West Federal Constituency and 8 Others).

Debate.

Amendment Proposed:

Insert a new Prayer (vi) as follows:

“urge the Executive Arm of Government to make a fundamental shift on governance approach that focuses on bloated cabinet structures, wasteful expenditure, oil theft, corruption and forex speculations” (*Hon. Ahmadu Usman Jaha — Chibok/Dambo/Gwoza Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that in June 2023, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmad Tinubu through the Central Bank of Nigeria announced changes to the country's foreign exchange market, that is, the foreign currencies can now be bought and sold at rates determined by the market and not by the central bank;

Also noted that the President's intention is to allow market forces to determine Naira value, but the alarming exchange rate has impacted Nigeria's economy, causing untold hardship due to increased demand for dollars and a dollar shortage;

Aware that about 90% of Nigeria's total export earnings are from oil, which is the mainstay of the country's economy, but changes in the price of oil around the world have a big impact on the country's foreign exchange market, this explains why the naira has continued to depreciate;

Recognized that Nigeria's foreign exchange inflows are lagging despite unification in June, with high demand for foreign currency and limited access to official markets incentivizing black market purchases, the Naira has lost a greater percent of its value against the dollar, falling from ₦778.602/\$ as of September 26, 2023, and nearly ₦1000/\$ at the parallel market, making it the first time Nigeria has liberalised the foreign exchange market;

Worried about inflation and the cost of living, depreciating naira makes imported goods more expensive, leading to higher inflation rates. This increased cost of living disproportionately affects the most vulnerable citizens, as they struggle to afford basic necessities, which are now glaring across the country;

Also worried about the reduction in investment, as the value of the Naira continues to lose value and depreciates against the dollar and other foreign currencies, foreign investors may be deterred from investing in Nigeria, fearing potential currency losses, which is capable of stunting economic growth and hindering the creation of new job opportunities for unemployed Nigerian youth;

Aware that a weaker and depreciating Naira could increase Nigeria's external debt servicing costs, potentially reducing government spending on critical sectors like healthcare and education;

Also aware that the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) frequently uses its foreign reserves to stabilise the naira, but this can deplete its reserves, making the country vulnerable to economic shocks;

Cognizant that addressing Nigeria's financial challenges requires collective responsibility from all stakeholders, including Parliament, which has been the voice of the common man;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Central Bank of Nigeria to implement monetary policy adjustments to stabilise the currency, address speculative activities in the forex market, and increase the withdrawal limit of the Naira to reduce the pressure on dollars and other foreign currencies;
- (ii) also urge the Executive Arm of Government to formulate policies and structural Reforms to reduce corruption and promote economic diversification within the nation's economy;
- (iii) further urge the Executive Arm of Government to promote exportation and reduce importation by enhancing foreign investors' Confidence on its Fiscal and Monetary Policies;
- (iv) mandate the Committees on Banking Regulations and National Security and Intelligence to interface with the Central Bank of Nigeria with the purpose of initiating compliance strategies;
- (v) also mandate the Committee on Banking Regulation to investigate the use of US Dollars and other foreign currencies as legal tender for domestic transactions in Nigeria; and
- (vi) still urge the Executive Arm of Government to make a fundamental shift on governance approach that focuses on bloated cabinet structures, wasteful expenditure, oil theft, corruption and forex speculations (**HR. 227/10/2023**).

15. Alleged Mismanagement of Funds and Other Irregularities in the Operations of the National Health Insurance Authority (NHIA)

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the National Health Insurance Authority, formerly known as the National Health Insurance Scheme, was established in 1999 to ensure the effective implementation of the National Health Insurance Policy and address the gaps in getting affordable treatment as well as ensuring universal access to quality healthcare for all Nigerians;

Also notes that the Federal Government has, over the years, driven the Health Insurance Policy through budgetary allocation under the management of the National Health Insurance Authority and some Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs);

Aware that HMOs were engaged and funded by the Federal Government to play an intermediary role in the implementation of the health insurance scheme by providing a wide range of medical services for enrollees;

Concerned that despite the huge budgetary allocations, records have shown that only a negligible 3% of persons in the formal sector have access to health insurance, leaving over 170 million Nigerians without Health Insurance;

Also concerned that the programme has been fraught with poor service delivery by the HMOs as well as low-quality services on the part of the healthcare service providers, as evidenced by the high level of dissatisfaction amongst enrollees who are thus discouraged from recommending the scheme to potential subscribers;

Disturbed by reports that in some hospitals, the pharmacy for patients covered by the NHIA is separate from the hospital's main pharmacy, and is allegedly stocked with low-quality drugs, as against the main pharmacy;

Also disturbed by reports that funds allocated for the implementation of the national health insurance

policy are being mismanaged, as well as allegations that some HMOs fail to remit funds or pay monthly capitations to the healthcare providers;

Worried that 25 years after the programme commenced, reports have shown that, out of a population of about 200 million, only about four million Nigerians are covered under the scheme, which is contrary to the claim by the Authority that over 10 million Nigerians are currently enrolled in the programme;

Also worried that the implementation of the scheme had been mired with corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, irregularities among HMOs and ill-treatment of enrollees by healthcare providers;

Resolves to:

Mandate the Committee on Healthcare Services to investigate alleged mismanagement of funds and other irregularities in the National Health Insurance Authority with a view to making relevant interventions to ensure effective implementation of the National Health Insurance Policy (*Hon. Esosa Iyawe — Oredo Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Agreed to.

The House:

Noted that the National Health Insurance Authority, formerly known as the National Health Insurance Scheme, was established in 1999 to ensure the effective implementation of the National Health Insurance Policy and address the gaps in getting affordable treatment as well as ensuring universal access to quality healthcare for all Nigerians;

Also noted that the Federal Government has, over the years, driven the Health Insurance Policy through budgetary allocation under the management of the National Health Insurance Authority and some Health Maintenance Organisations (HMOs);

Aware that HMOs were engaged and funded by the Federal Government to play an intermediary role in the implementation of the health insurance scheme by providing a wide range of medical services for enrollees;

Concerned that despite the huge budgetary allocations, records have shown that only a negligible 3% of persons in the formal sector have access to health insurance, leaving over 170 million Nigerians without Health Insurance;

Also concerned that the programme has been fraught with poor service delivery by the HMOs as well as low-quality services on the part of the healthcare service providers, as evidenced by the high level of dissatisfaction amongst enrollees who are thus discouraged from recommending the scheme to potential subscribers;

Disturbed by reports that in some hospitals, the pharmacy for patients covered by the NHIA is separate from the hospital's main pharmacy, and is allegedly stocked with low-quality drugs, as against the main pharmacy;

Also disturbed by reports that funds allocated for the implementation of the national health insurance policy are being mismanaged, as well as allegations that some HMOs fail to remit funds or pay monthly capitations to the healthcare providers;

Worried that 25 years after the programme commenced, reports have shown that, out of a population

of about 200 million, only about four million Nigerians are covered under the scheme, which is contrary to the claim by the Authority that over 10 million Nigerians are currently enrolled in the programme;

Also worried that the implementation of the scheme had been mired with corruption, lack of transparency and accountability, irregularities among HMOs and ill-treatment of enrollees by healthcare providers;

Resolved to:

Mandate the Committee on Healthcare Services to investigate alleged mismanagement of funds and other irregularities in the National Health Insurance Authority with a view to making relevant interventions to ensure effective implementation of the National Health Insurance Policy (**HR. 228/10/2023**).

16. Need to Commence the Construction of Section V, of the East West Road to Link Oron, Akwa Ibom State and Odukpani Calabar in Cross River State

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the East-West Road, a 388-kilometer Federal Trunk A2 dual carriageway, connects the Niger-Delta states and Ikom Federal Trunk A4 road, initially designed with 42 bridges and 1000 culverts was awarded ₦246 Billion naira in 2006;

Alsop notes that the road is divided into five sections, Warri - Kaiama in Delta/Bayelsa State, Port Harcourt-Ahoada-Kaiama in Rivers/Bayelsa State, Eleme - Onne - Ete in Rivers/Akwa Ibom State, Ikot Abasi - Eket-Oron Road in Akwa Ibom/Cross River State;

Aware that Sections I to IV of the road have reached 85% completion, with the Federal Government releasing funds for a new bypass and other works. This has increased the contract sum from ₦246 billion to ₦506 billion, with over 80% of the funds already released;

Concerned that the construction of Section IV of the 30km dual carriageway from Oron to Calabar is still ongoing, despite contract awards from the Federal government. The road, which links Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, is in poor condition with potholes causing numerous losses and forcing commuters to travel by sea;

Believes that the construction of Section V of the East-West Road is expected to address Nigeria's infrastructural deficit and enhance economic stability by facilitating the movement of goods;

Cognizant that construction of a new East-West road section is expected to alleviate the current six-hour journey time, which has significantly increased transportation costs in the region;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Work to ensure commencement of the construction of section V of the East West Road.; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Works, and Appropriations to make provision for the Construction of Section V of the East West Road to link Oron, Akwa Ibom State and Odukpani Calabar, Cross River State in the 2024 budget estimates. (*Hon. Bassey Akiba — Calabar Municipal/Odukpani Federal Constituency and 7 Others*)

Agreed to.

(**HR. 229/10/2023**).

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

17. Perennial Gully Erosion Menace in Nkisi Aroli 1 and Obeleagu Communities of Onitsha North/South Local Government Areas of Anambra State

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that Section 14(2)(b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended), provides that the security, safety, and welfare of the people of Nigeria shall be the primary purpose of government and that the National Assembly is saddled with the task of making laws for the peace, order, and good governance of the Federation;

Also notes that the issue of gully erosion is a significant concern in the Nkisi Aroli and Obeleagu communities of Onitsha North Local Government Area, Anambra State;

Aware of the massive devastation and destruction of private and public buildings in the Nkisi Aroli and Obeleagu communities of Onitsha North Local Government Area in Anambra State has resulted in the loss of lives and properties;

Worried that the menace poses a significant threat to the communities, thus causing displacement and disruption of economic and commercial activities and the loss of ancestral homes and graves;

Also worried that despite efforts by successive State Governments, the erosion menace in the State is causing immense destruction to the lives and properties of residents in the area;

Concerned that since the rainy season began this year, numerous buildings have collapsed, leaving residents homeless, this devastation is beyond the state government's capacity, thus, and requiring urgent intervention by the Federal Government.

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Environment, Ecological Fund Office and other relevant Agency of the Government to contain and stop the gully erosion in Nkisi Aroli/Obeleagu Area of Onitsha North/South Local Government Areas of Anambra State; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Environment, and Ecological Fund to ensure compliance(*Hon. Idu Emeka Godwin Obiajulu — Onitsha North/Onitsha South Federal Constituency*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 230/10/2023).

Motion referred to the Committees on Environment, and Ecological Fund, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

18. Need to Control the Erosion Ravaging Bauchi -Gombe Federal Road, Particularly Alkaleri/Kirfi Section of the Federal High Way of Bauchi State

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes the devastating effect of ravaging gully erosion and landslide on the Bauchi-Alkaleri - Gombe Federal road between Alkaleri and Bara, all within Alkaleri/Kirfi Federal Constituency, Bauchi State;

Also notes that the road has been cut off by the gully erosion and the entire road network is under serious threat of imminent collapse;

Worried that the erosion and landslide are creating traffic gridlock along the section of the Bauchi-Gombe Highway thereby causing untold hardship to road users, loss of lives and destruction of farmlands;

Concerned that if the menace of gully erosion and landslide is not urgently controlled, the section of the road will completely cave in, thus leading to disconnection of the highway with attendant severe consequences and cutting off of vehicular movement into Bauchi, Gombe and other North Eastern States;

Also concerned that the magnitude of the menace is beyond the control of the State Governments;

Worried that the Bauchi-Gombe highway is a gateway to business activities and other relationships between the North-East and the North Central of Nigeria;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to commence reconstruction of the affected parts of the Bauchi-Gombe Federal road and particularly, the section between Alkaleri and Bara, in Alkaleri/Kirfi Local Government Areas of Bauchi State;
- (ii) also urge the Ecological Fund Office and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to ensure regular surveillance of erosion-prone areas to rip erosion threats on the Federal roads across the country; and
- (iii) mandate the Committee on Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to ensure implementation (*Hon. Kabiru Yusuf Alhaji — Alkaleri/Kirfi Federal Constituency*).

Debate.

Amendments Proposed:

- (i) *Insert* a new Prayer (iv), as follows:
“call on the Budget Office of the Federation to provide sufficient funding in the 2024 budget for the execution of contract for the reconstruction of 105 kilometres Bauchi - Gombe road awarded to Messrs ENERCO Nig. Ltd by the Federal Ministry of Works in 2017” (*Hon. Mansur Manu Soro — Darazo/Ganjuwa Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

- (ii) *Insert* a new Prayer (v), as follows:
“also call on the North East Development Commission (NEDC) to award the total reconstruction of the remaining span of 60 kilometres Bauchi - Dindima - Lawanti - Gombe” (*Hon. Mansur Manu Soro — Darazo/Ganjuwa Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

- (iii) *Insert* a new Prayer (vi), as follows:
“mandate the Committees on Works, FERMA, North East Development Commission, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance” (*Hon. Mansur Manu Soro — Darazo/Ganjuwa Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

- (iv) In Prayer (iii), immediately after the word “FERMA”, *insert* the words “Ecological Fund” (*Hon. James Shuaibu Barka — Gombi/Hong Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted the devastating effect of ravaging gully erosion and landslide on the Bauchi-Alkaleri - Gombe Federal road between Alkaleri and Bara, all within Alkaleri/Kirfi Federal Constituency, Bauchi State;

Also noted that the road has been cut off by the gully erosion and the entire road network is under serious threat of imminent collapse;

Worried that the erosion and landslide are creating traffic gridlock along the section of the Bauchi-Gombe Highway thereby causing untold hardship to road users, loss of lives and destruction of farmlands;

Concerned that if the menace of gully erosion and landslide is not urgently controlled, the section of the road will completely cave in, thus leading to disconnection of the highway with attendant severe consequences and cutting off of vehicular movement into Bauchi, Gombe and other North Eastern States;

Also concerned that the magnitude of the menace is beyond the control of the State Governments;

Worried that the Bauchi-Gombe highway is a gateway to business activities and other relationships between the North-East and the North Central of Nigeria;

Resolved to:

- (i) urge the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to Commence reconstruction of the affected parts of the Bauchi-Gombe Federal road and particularly, the section between Alkaleri and Bara, in Alkaleri/Kirfi Local Government Areas of Bauchi State;
- (ii) also urge the Ecological Fund Office and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Ecological Fund to ensure regular surveillance of erosion-prone areas to rip erosion threats on the Federal roads across the country;
- (iii) call on the Budget Office of the Federation to provide sufficient funding in the 2024 budget for the execution of contract for the reconstruction of 105 kilometres Bauchi - Gombe road awarded to Messrs ENERCO Nig. Ltd by the Federal Ministry of Works in 2017;
- (iv) also call on the North East Development Commission (NEDC) to award the total reconstruction of the remaining span of 60 kilometres Bauchi - Dindima - Lawanti - Gombe;
- (v) mandate the Committee on Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to ensure implementation; and
- (vi) also mandate the Committees on Works, FERMA, North East Development Commission, and Legislative Compliance to ensure compliance (**HR. 231/10/2023**).

19. Establishment of Functional Libraries in the Seven Hundred and Seventy-Four Local Government Areas in Nigeria

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that Libraries serve as vital catalysts for intellectual growth, education, and societal progress and that many local governments lack functional libraries within their communities;

Also notes that the establishment of functional libraries at the local government levels will enhance literacy rates and educational opportunities and provide access to a diverse range of books, educational resources, and learning materials, enabling children, youth and adults to develop their reading skills, expand their knowledge, and pursue lifelong learning;

Aware that local libraries will provide essential information, empowering individuals to make informed decisions, develop critical thinking skills, and promote cultural exchange, social cohesion, and engagement through educational programs, workshops, events, and cultural celebrations, fostering a sense of belonging and unity;

Informed that functional libraries can bridge the digital divide by offering computers, internet connectivity, and digital literacy training, enhancing digital skills, online resources, and employability prospects;

Also aware that establishing functional libraries requires a suitable infrastructure, including buildings, furniture and necessary equipment, the need for Local governments to collaborate with educational institutions and utilize existing facilities or consider repurposing community spaces to minimize costs;

Convinced that the establishment of active functional libraries in all 774 Local government areas in Nigeria will contribute to the overall development of the nation;

Further aware that Nigerians' reading culture is low, and functional libraries can reshape reading habits and enhance the agricultural revolution. These libraries provide practical information and pedagogic knowledge on farming and farm implementations;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Education to establish an active and functional library and e-library across the 774 Local Government Areas in Nigeria; and
- (ii) mandate the Committee on University Education to ensure implementation. (*Hon. Jesse Okey-Joe Onuakalusi — Oshodi/Isolo II Federal Constituency and 8 Others*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 232/10/2023).

Motion referred to the Committee on University Education, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

20. Need to Rehabilitate the Okpanam-Asaba Federal Highway, Delta State

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the Okpanam-Asaba Road in Delta State is a strategic road which connects the State and major parts of the South to the Eastern part of the country;

Also notes that the road is an essential aspect of infrastructural development that would enhance economic activities in the region being a link road to the commercial city of Onitsha;

Concerned that the road is currently in a deplorable state as it is at the verge of being cut off by erosion, thus impeding the human and vehicular movement and consequently slowing down economic activities as well as posing great threat to both the lives and livelihood of the people who depend on the road for business activities;

Worried that if the road is not urgently rehabilitated, it could deteriorate even further with the resultant effect of completely paralyzing economic activities within the region;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Works to include reconstruction of the Okpanam-Asaba Road in Delta State in the 2024 budget estimates;
- (ii) also urge the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to commence remedial work on parts of the road that are not completely destroyed; and
- (iii) mandate the Committees on Works, and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) to ensure implementation (*Hon. Ngozi Okolie — Aniocha North/Aniocha South/Oshimili North/Oshimili South Federal Constituency and 8 Others*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 233/10/2023).

Motion referred to the Committees on Works, and Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA), pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

21. Death of Dr Michael Umoh, Medical Personnel on Duty at Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH)

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes the importance of medical personnel as the fulcrum of the healthcare delivery system;

Aware that on September 17, 2023, a medical officer on residency programme in the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH), Dr Michael Umoh reportedly died after spending 72 hours on duty in the Neurosurgery Unit of the Institution;

Also aware of a recent related incident of a young female medical doctor who lost her life due to elevator failure in a General Hospital, which could have been avoided with improved working conditions;

Concerned that there have been several other reports of medical personnel dying as a result of harsh working conditions and other forms of negligence, thus robbing the country of her best brains;

Cognizant that such similar cases have reinforced the agitation of National Association of Resident Doctors, Nigeria Medical Association and other associated bodies for improved conditions of service as evidenced by the recent industrial strike embarked upon by Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) to press home their demands;

Resolves to:

- (i) observe a minute of silence in honour of the deceased doctor; and
- (ii) mandate the Committee on Health Institutions to investigate the anomalous deaths of Dr. Michael Umoh, a medical personnel at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) to ensure that medical personnel in Nigeria work under favourable conditions and report back within six (6) weeks (*Hon. Adedayo Samuel Adesola — Apapa Federal Constituency and 8 Others*).

Debate.

Amendment Proposed:

In Prayer (ii), immediately after the words “Health Institutions”, *insert* the words “Labour, Employment and Productivity” (*Hon. Dachung Bagos Musa — Jos South/Jos East Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question on the Motion as amended — Agreed to.

The House:

Noted the importance of medical personnel as the fulcrum of the healthcare delivery system;

Aware that on September 17, 2023, a medical officer on residency programme in the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH), Dr Michael Umoh reportedly died after spending 72 hours on duty in the Neurosurgery unit of the Institution;

Also aware of a recent related incident of a young female medical doctor who lost her life due to elevator failure in a General Hospital, which could have been avoided with improved working conditions;

Concerned that there have been several other reports of medical personnel dying as a result of harsh working conditions and other forms of negligence, thus robbing the country of her best brains;

Cognizant that such similar cases have reinforced the agitation of National Association of Resident Doctors, Nigeria Medical Association and other associated bodies for improved conditions of service as evidenced by the recent industrial strike embarked upon by Nigerian Association of Resident Doctors (NARD) to press home their demands;

Resolved to:

- (i) observe a minute of silence in honour of the deceased doctor; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Health Institutions, Labour, Employment and Productivity to investigate the anomalous deaths of Dr Michael Umoh, a medical personnel at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital (LUTH) to ensure that medical personnel in Nigeria work under favourable conditions and report within six (6) weeks (**HR. 234/10/2023**).

22. Need to Rehabilitate and Adequately Equip Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano

Motion made and Question proposed:

The House:

Notes that the Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital was established in 1988 to provide specialist medical attention to the sick, train medical personnel and undertake research for the advancement of medical knowledge;

Concerned that the hospital, which caters for patients from Kano and neighbouring States, including Jigawa, Gombe, Yobe, Katsina, and Bauchi is overstretched and lacks adequate equipment to function optimally, especially in critical units such as the Accident and Emergency (A&E) section;

Also concerned that the hospital's Cardiology Department, which was widely reputed for excellence, is currently in a deplorable state and may soon become moribund as most of the equipment are obsolete and non-functional;

Worried that considering the rising cases of cardiovascular diseases in the country and the inadequacy

of specialized care for such cases in public hospitals, patients are often referred to private hospitals which they mostly cannot afford, hence the increasing death rate from the disease continues to rise;

Also worried about the shortage of experts such as Cardiovascular Percussionists, anesthetists and heart surgeons in Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital;

Resolves to:

- (i) urge the Federal Ministry of Health to rehabilitate, adequately equip and recruit relevant personnel, including experts required for effective and efficient operations in the Cardiology Department and the Accident and Emergency Unit of the Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano; and
- (ii) mandate the Committees on Health Institutions, and Appropriations to conduct a needs assessment of the Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital, Kano and make provision in the 2024 budget estimates to ensure that the hospital is rehabilitated and adequately equipped to provide specialized and optimum healthcare services to Nigerians, and report within four (4) weeks (*Hon. Hassan Shehu Hussain — Nasarawa Federal Constituency and 8 Others*).

Agreed to.

(HR. 235/10/2023).

Motion referred to the Committee on Health Institutions, pursuant to Order Eight, Rule 9 (5).

23. Consideration of Reports

- (i) ***A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Fire Service Act, Cap. F29, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Federal Fire and Rescue Service (Establishment) Bill, 2023; and for Related Matters (HB. 211) (Committee of the Whole):***
Motion made and Question proposed, “That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Repeal the Fire Service Act, Cap. F29, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Federal Fire and Rescue Service (Establishment) Bill, 2023; and for Related Matters (HB. 211)” (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

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)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO REPEAL THE FIRE SERVICE ACT,
CAP. F29, LAWS OF THE FEDERATION OF NIGERIA, 2004 AND
ENACT THE FEDERAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE (ESTABLISHMENT)
ACT, 2023; AND FOR RELATED MATTERS (HB. 211)

PART I — OBJECTIVE AND APPLICATION

Clause 1: Objective.

The objective of this Bill is to provide a legal and institutional framework to —

- (a) prevent, extinguish, control and investigate fire disasters;
- (b) save and protect lives and property;

- (c) provide rescue and first aid services; and
- (d) provide other related humanitarian services (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Application.

- (1) This Bill shall apply to every State of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, within the area of authority of the Federal Fire and Rescue Service.
- (2) This Bill may apply outside the area of authority of the Federal Fire and Rescue Service in situations of emergency or special need, subject to such arrangements with the appropriate authority in that area (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART II — ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FEDERAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Clause 3: Establishment of the Federal Fire and Rescue Service.

- (1) There is established a Federal Fire and Rescue Service (in this Bill referred to as "the Service").
- (2) The Service —
 - (a) shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal;
 - (b) may sue or be sued in its corporate name; and
 - (c) may acquire, hold and dispose of any property for the purpose of performing its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 4: Functions of the Service.

- (1) To achieve the objectives of this Bill, the Service shall —
 - (a) be responsible for promoting fire safety in Nigeria by —
 - (i) organising public education and creating awareness on the hazards of fire,
 - (ii) providing information on the steps to be taken to prevent fires, death or injury by fire,
 - (iii) giving advice on how to prevent fires and restrict their spread in buildings and other property, and
 - (iv) providing instructions on the means of escape from buildings and other properties in cases of fire;
 - (b) provide fire-fighting and rescue services by using equipment

- maintained by the Service for the prevention, extinguishment and control of fire or natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies;
- (c) be responsible for protecting lives and properties in the event of fire incident;
 - (d) provide technical advice for building plans in respect of machinery and structural layouts to facilitate escape from fire, rescue operations and fire management;
 - (e) train and improve the capacity of its personnel in fire prevention, extinguishment and control;
 - (f) co-ordinate and advise on the training of personnel in firefighting departments of other institutions in the country;
 - (g) train and organise fire marshal and volunteer squads;
 - (h) use any of its equipment to respond to critical emergencies other than for fire-fighting purposes;
 - (i) conduct investigation, in conjunction with relevant authorities, into fire incidents and carrying out risk assessment in public and private places considered to be a potential risk to human life and property;
 - (j) inspect and certify fire extinguishers for use in buildings and other designated places;
 - (k) provide and maintain fire alarms and equipment in identified locations in any street or public place;
 - (l) issue fire safety permit, certificate and licence for public building designs, plans and other structures, and enforce compliance with the requirement for insurance of public buildings as provided in the Insurance Act and carry out inspection and enforcement to ensure compliance;
 - (m) perform other humanitarian services, including the protection of lives and properties, in the event of a disaster; and
 - (n) perform other functions as may be necessary or incidental to the objectives of the Service.
- (2) To perform its functions under this Bill, the Service shall make arrangements to —
- (a) secure the provision of the personnel, services and equipment necessary to meet the demands of fire and rescue services;
 - (b) secure the provision of training for its personnel;
 - (c) deal with calls for help and summon personnel;
 - (d) obtain information needed to extinguish fire and protect lives and properties; and

- (e) promote collaboration with relevant agencies and institutions in fire and emergency rescue operations (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 4 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART III — ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF OF THE SERVICE

Clause 5: Headquarters and departments of the Service.

- (1) The headquarters of the Service shall be in Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory.
- (2) The Service shall have the departments specified in the Schedule to this Bill.
- (3) Notwithstanding subsection (2), the Service may create such other departments and units in the Service as it considers appropriate (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 5 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 6: Appointment of the Controller-General.

- (1) There is for the Service, a Controller-General, who shall be appointed by the President from among serving officers of the Service not below the rank of Assistant Controller-General, on the recommendation of the Board.
- (2) The Controller-General shall be —
 - (a) the chief executive and accounting officer of the Service; and
 - (b) responsible for the administration of the Service (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 6 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 7: Qualification and tenure of office of the Controller-General.

- (1) The Controller-General shall —
 - (a) possess relevant academic qualifications not below first degree or its equivalent from a recognised institution;
 - (b) possess a minimum of 20 years post qualification experience, such experience not being less than that required for the post of a Controller-General or its equivalent in similar organisations in Nigeria;
 - (c) hold office for a term of four years and may be re-appointed for another term of four years and no more, provided that such tenure shall not exceed the statutory years of service as provided by the Public Service Rules; and
 - (d) hold office on such terms and conditions as may be specified in the letter of appointment.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1), the Controller-General may —

- (a) resign by a written notice addressed to the President; or
- (b) be removed by the President for inability to perform the functions of the office, misconduct or corruption (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 7 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 8: Powers of the Controller-General.

The Controller-General shall direct, superintend and regulate the Service in all matters relating to —

- (a) fire safety, prevention and extinguishment;
- (b) procurement and use of equipment, machinery, appliances, materials and other resources for the effective implementation of the provisions of this Bill;
- (c) training, distribution of duties and deployment of Service personnel;
- (d) mutual relations with other institutions relating to the implementation of the provisions of this Bill;
- (e) orders and modes of proceedings and maintenance of discipline of personnel of the Service;
- (f) preparation of the annual budget of the Service; and
- (g) the exercise of powers necessary to give effect to the provisions of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 8 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 9: Appointment of Deputy Controller-General.

- (1) There is appointed for the Service a minimum of eight Deputy Controller-General from among serving Assistant Controller-General of the Service as may be recommended by the Board.
- (2) A Deputy Controller-General shall be a person with requisite qualification and experience in Service operations as may be specified for the post.
- (3) The Deputy Controller-General shall assist the Controller-General in the discharge of the duties conferred on the Controller-General.
- (4) There is appointed for the administration of the Service such other subordinates to the Controller-General as may be necessary for the administration of the Service (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Amendment Proposed:

In Subclause (1), immediately after the word “Board”, insert the words “from the six (6) geo-political zones” (*Hon. Nkem Kanma Kama — Ohaozara/Onicha/Ivo Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 9 as amended, stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 10: Personnel of the Service.

- (1) The Board shall employ for the Service such number of personnel as it may consider necessary for the proper and efficient performance of the functions of the Service.
- (2) The terms and conditions of service including remuneration, allowances and benefits of the personnel of the Service shall be as determined by the Board in consultation with relevant Federal Government Agencies.
- (3) The employment, discipline and removal of the personnel of the Service shall be subject to such terms and conditions of service as the Board may determine in accordance with the approved Government Policy (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 10 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 11: Structure of the Service.

The Service shall have the following command structure —

- (a) Headquarters Command, which shall oversee the administration of the Service in all the Zones and States Command;
- (b) Zonal Commands, which shall be established in the six geo-political zones, each to be headed by an Assistant Controller General, who shall coordinate the operations and other activities of the Service in the zone; and
- (c) State Commands, which shall be established in each state of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, each to be headed by a Controller, who shall perform the functions of the Service in the State and the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 11 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 12: Pension and Service benefits.

- (1) Employment in the Service shall be public service in the Federation within the meaning of the Constitution.
- (2) The personnel of the Service shall, in respect of their employment in the Service, be entitled to such pension and other retirement benefits as prescribed for persons with equivalent grades in similar organisations under the Pension Reform Act.
- (3) Without prejudice to the provisions of subsection (1), nothing in this Bill shall prevent the appointment of a person to any office on conditions which preclude the grant of pension or other retirement benefits in respect of that office.
- (4) The personnel of the Service shall be paid a hazard allowance which shall be an agreed percentage to be determined by the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission.
- (5) The Service shall adopt an accident and life insurance policy in favour of every personnel of the Service (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 12 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART IV — POWERS OF SERVICE PERSONNEL IN
FIRE SAFETY, PREVENTION, RESCUE AND EXTINGUISHMENT

Clause 13: Information on outbreak of fire.

Any person who possesses any information regarding an outbreak of fire shall communicate the same without delay to the nearest fire station of the Service (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 13 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 14: Response to calls.

The Service shall respond to all fire and emergency related calls in accordance with its standard operating procedures (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 14 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 15: Measures for fire safety, prevention and rescue.

The Service shall, in order to ensure fire safety, prevention and extinguishment, make the following efficient arrangements —

- (a) give advice, upon request, in respect of buildings and other property as to —
 - (i) fire prevention,
 - (ii) the restriction of the spread of fires, or
 - (iii) means of escape in case of fire;
- (b) early deployment of its resources, equipment and trained personnel, which shall be on stand-by duties at all times;
- (c) deal with calls for assistance, in case of fire or other emergencies; and
- (d) obtain information by inspection or otherwise (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 15 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 16: Power to obtain information.

The Service may, in the discharge of its duties under this Bill, require the owner or occupier of any building or other property as may be specified, to supply information with respect to —

- (a) the character of such building or other property as may be specified;
- (b) available water supplies;
- (c) the means of access to such building or other property as may be specified; and
- (d) any other material particulars,

and such owner or occupier shall be obliged to furnish such information (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 16 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 17: Inspection and access to building or property.

- (1) The Controller-General may, under section 16 of this Bill, authorise in writing, any personnel of the Service to enter any building or other property at all reasonable hours, as may be required to perform the functions of the Service under this Bill.
- (2) Where any authorised personnel of the Service is refused entry into a building or property, the Court may, on an *ex-parte* application made by the Service, order the person in possession of the building or property to admit the personnel.
- (3) A Court order issued under subsection (2) shall remain in effect until the purposes for which the entry was made is accomplished (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 17 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 18: Power of the personnel of the Service to enter upon building, place or property.

- (1) To extinguish fire and carrying out rescue operations, the Controller-General or an officer authorised by him, may, without the consent of the occupier or the owner enter, and if necessary, break into any building, place or property —
 - (a) in which a fire has, or is reasonably believed to have broken out;
 - (b) which he believes it is necessary to enter to —
 - (i) protect the building, place or property from fire or from acts done for fire-fighting purposes, or
 - (ii) extinguish a fire;
 - (c) to take any measure on a building, place or property as he may deem necessary to —
 - (i) extinguish any fire or protect such building, place or property from fire or acts done for fire-fighting purposes, and
 - (ii) protect, rescue or assist persons or animals;
 - (d) to pull down any building or other structure, or destroy or remove any property, as he may deem necessary to extinguish or limit the spread of any fire; and
 - (e) to take water from any source without payment or other compensation, to extinguish a fire or limit the spread of fire.
- (2) Any injury to a person or damage to property caused by personnel of the Service or any Police officer in the execution of any duty in extinguishing fire or in aid or assistance to a person or animal under the provisions of this Bill shall be deemed to be injury or damage by fire (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 18 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 19: Measures to ensure adequate water supply.

- (1) The Controller-General shall take all reasonable measures to ensure adequate supply of water and secure its availability for use, in the event of fire.
- (2) The Controller-General may issue guidelines to —
 - (a) ensure an adequate supply of water and its availability to the Service in the event of fire, with or without payment;
 - (b) provide fire hydrants or other sources of water supply at points to be indicated;
 - (c) provide distinguishing marks denoting the location of each fire hydrant or other points of water supply;
 - (d) provide uniformity in fire hydrants, other sources of water supply and the distinguishing marks;
 - (e) regulate the pressure of water available from fire hydrants or other sources of water supply and provide any auxiliary pumping plant and equipment as may be necessary; and
 - (f) liaise with any water supply authority in respect of proposed installation of new water mains or carry out major alterations to any existing main pipes, together with details, plans and other information of the proposed works (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 19 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 20: Traffic control.

- (1) To ensure or expedite the free passage of any fire engine or other mobile fire-fighting equipment while proceeding to a fire scene, a personnel of the Service may, where it is deemed necessary or desirable to do so —
 - (a) stop or regulate the traffic on any street or thoroughfare; and
 - (b) remove any person or vehicle from a property, street or thoroughfare.
- (2) A person or vehicle using any street or thoroughfare shall yield right of way to fire engines and other mobile fire-fighting equipment proceeding to a fire and operating any prescribed signal, audible or visual.
- (3) The Service may request for the assistance of any relevant security agency, as may be necessary, to give effect to the provisions of this section (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 20 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

- # **Clause 21: Establishment of the National Council on Fire and Rescue.**
- (1) There is established the National Council on Fire and Rescue (“the Council”).
 - (2) The Council shall consist of —
 - (a) the Minister, who shall be the Chairman;
 - (b) the Controller-General of the Service;
 - (c) the Director-General of National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA);
 - (d) the Commissioner of National Insurance Commission (NAICOM); and
 - (e) one representative of the Fire and Rescue Services from each of the 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory.
 - (3) There shall be a Secretariat for the Council, which shall be domiciled at the Federal Fire and Rescue Service headquarters, Abuja.
 - (4) The Council shall adopt and regulate its proceedings during its meetings (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 21 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

- Clause 22: Functions of the Council.**
The Council shall —
- (a) formulate and regularly update the National Fire and Rescue Policy and the National Fire Safety Code;
 - (b) advise the Federal, State and Local Governments on matters affecting the National Fire and Rescue Policy and fire safety delivery;
 - (c) ensure the availability of institutional and technical capacity at the Federal, State and Local Government levels in fire safety delivery;
 - (d) receive communiques from the conference of the State directors of the Fire and Rescue Services in the 36 States of the Federation, the Federal Capital Territory and the Controller-General of the Federal Fire and Rescue Service;
 - (e) develop standard practices for fire and rescue services and emergency responses;
 - (f) review on regular basis, the preparedness of the Fire and Rescue Services for emergency responses;
 - (g) promote effective inter-governmental, inter-institutional and inter-state collaborations in fire safety, prevention and rescue operations; and
 - (h) perform such other functions which, in the opinion of the Council, are required to improve the standards for fire and rescue services and emergency responses (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 22 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 23: Fire Disaster Response Centre.

- (1) There is established a Fire Disaster Response Centre (in this Bill referred "the Centre") in each of the Zonal Commands of the Service.
- (2) The Centre shall be the coordinating point for responses by the Service to any major fire disaster or emergency within any affected zone.
- (3) The Centre in the Zonal Commands shall be under the direction and command of the Assistant Controller-General in charge of each Zonal Command.
- (4) The Centre shall, where necessary, work in collaboration with relevant Federal, State, Local Government or private agencies in fire and rescue services, subject to special arrangements by the collaborating bodies (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 23 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART VI — FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Clause 24: Fund of the Service.

There is established a fund of the Service ("Fund") which shall consist of —

- (a) all subventions and budgetary allocations from the Federal Government;
- (b) foreign aid or assistance from international, regional or sub-regional bodies, provided that such foreign aid or assistance are consistent with the objectives of the Service;
- (c) all sums that accrue to the Service by way of gifts, endowments or testamentary dispositions; and
- (d) such other funds as may accrue to the Service from its investments or from the disposal of its assets (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 24 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 25: Expenditure of the Service.

The Service shall apply the proceeds of the fund referred to under section 24 of this Bill to —

- (a) meet its administrative and operating costs;
- (b) pay salaries, wages, fees, allowances, retirement benefits including pensions and any other remuneration payable to the personnel of the Service;
- (c) publicise and promote the activities of the Service;
- (d) purchase or acquire property, or develop or maintain any property vested in or owned by the Service; and
- (e) undertake any other expenditure in connection with its functions under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 25 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 26: Accounts and audit.

- (1) The Service shall, not later than 31 July in each year or such time as may be prescribed by the Financial Regulations, prepare and submit to the Minister, an estimate of its income and expenditure for the next succeeding year.
- (2) The Service shall keep proper accounts and records of its incomes and expenditure, assets and liabilities, and shall prepare in respect of each year, a statement of accounts in manual and electronic form, and shall cause the accounts to be audited not later than six months after the end of the year to which such accounts relate, by auditors appointed by the Service from the list and in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Auditor-General for the Federation.
- (3) An auditor appointed under subsection (2) shall have access to all records relating to the accounts which are kept by the Service or its agents and shall have power to require from any personnel or agent of the Service such information and explanation as in the auditor's opinion are necessary for the purpose of the audit (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 26 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 27: Annual report.

The Service shall not later than six months after the expiration of each financial year, prepare and submit to the Minister, an annual report of its activities and operations during the previous year and shall include in such report, a copy of its audited accounts and the auditor's report for the year (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 27 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 28: Power to accept gifts.

The Service may accept gifts on such terms and conditions, if any, as may be specified by the donor of the gift, provided that the terms and conditions are not contrary to the objectives and functions of the Service (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 28 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 29: Reciprocal arrangements with other Fire and Rescue Services.

The Controller-General may, with the approval of the Minister, enter into an agreement with any Fire and Rescue Service or any other entity, to provide personnel, services or equipment which may be required for fire and rescue services, on such terms as may be provided under an agreement on reciprocal basis, in the public interest (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 29 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART VII — OFFENCES AND PENALTIES

Clause 30: Penalty for non-compliance.

A person who contravenes or fails to comply with any of the provisions of this Bill, or with any regulation made under this Bill, for which no other penalty is specifically provided, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least N200,000, or imprisonment for a term of at least six months or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 30 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 31: Impersonation of Service personnel.

A person who in any way impersonates a Service personnel commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦300,000 or imprisonment for a term at least one year or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 31 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 32: Obtaining employment into the Service by fraud.

A person who knowingly uses or attempts to pass off any forged or false identity, letter or other document for the purpose of obtaining employment into the Service, or who, on applying for employment into the Service makes any false statement, whether orally or in writing, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦300,000 or imprisonment for a term at least one year or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 32 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 33: Communication of confidential or secret information.

A Service personnel who at any time communicates or attempts to communicate any confidential or secret information obtained by him in the course of his duties in the Service to an unauthorised person, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦300,000 or imprisonment for a term at least six months or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 33 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 34: Obstruction of Service personnel and fire engines.

(1) A person who —

(a) obstructs, interferes with, assaults or resists a Service personnel in the execution of his duty, or

(b) aids, invites, induces or abets any other person to obstruct, interfere with, assault, or resist a Service personnel or any person assisting him in the execution of his duties,

commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine at least ₦300,000 imprisonment for a term of one year or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose.

(2) A person who obstructs or delays the passage of any fire engine maintained by the Service or other mobile fire-fighting equipment proceeding to a fire or other emergencies, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦300,000 or imprisonment for a term at least one year or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 34 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 35: Failure to yield to right of way to fire engines.

A person who fails to yield right of way to a fire engine or other mobile fire-fighting

equipment maintained by the Service as required under this Bill, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦50,000 or imprisonment for a term of at least one year or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 35 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 36: False alarm.

A person who willfully gives or causes to be given a false alarm of a fire to the Service or a Service personnel, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦100,000 or imprisonment for a term of at least three months or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 36 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 37: Interference with fire-fighting equipment.

A person who unlawfully interferes with, damages, or removes any fire-fighting equipment maintained by the Service, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦300,000 or imprisonment for a term at least one year or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 37 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 38: Contraventions or failure to comply with regulations in respect of buildings.

- (1) An owner, occupier or agent of a building or property who contravenes any, provision of a regulation or requirement made under this Bill, which —
 - (a) prohibit, controls or limit the use of a building, or property at any particular time,
 - (b) prohibit, controls or limit the use of a building or property by a specific number of persons at any particular time, or
 - (c) require the installation or maintenance of any fire-fighting equipment in or upon a building or property,commits an offence.
- (2) A person who commits an offence under the provisions of subsections (1) (a), (b) or (c) is liable on conviction to a fine of at least ₦500,000 or imprisonment for a term of at least two years or for any non-custodial sentence that the court may impose.
- (3) Where a person is convicted under subsection (1), the Court may, in addition to the penalty prescribed under subsection (2), order that the building —
 - (a) shall be demolished; or
 - (b) the owner, occupier or agent remove or bear the cost of removing the materials without compensation.
- (4) Any demolition or removal order made under subsection (3) shall be executed by the owner, occupier or agent within the time ordered by the Court (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 38 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 39: Offence by corporate bodies.

Where an offence under this Bill is committed by a corporate body, firm or other association of individuals —

- (a) the corporate body and every director, manager, secretary or other similar officer of the corporate body;
- (b) every partner or officer of the firm;
- (c) every person concerned in the management of the affairs of the association; or
- (d) every person who purports to act in that capacity,

commits an offence and is liable to be proceeded against and punished for the offence in like manner as if that person had committed the offence, unless the person proves that the act or omission constituting the offence took place without the knowledge, consent or connivance of the person (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 39 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART VIII — MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Clause 40: Charges for services rendered by the Service.

- (1) The Service shall not charge for any service rendered by it in extinguishing fires and in rescue operations.
- (2) The Service may charge for any of its activities or other services, other than for the purpose of extinguishing fires and rescues, at the rates to be prescribed (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 40 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 41: Fire Service not to be used for suppressing civil disturbances.

The Service shall not be employed or engaged for purposes of prevention, control or suppression of riot or other civil disturbance except as may be expressly authorised by the Minister (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 41 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 42: Training for non-personnel.

A person who is not a Service personnel may be trained in fire-fighting and prevention on such terms as to payment or otherwise as the Controller-General may prescribe (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 42 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 43: Power to give directives.

- (1) The Minister may give general policy guidelines to the Service.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1), the Minister may give to the Service directives of a general or specific nature relating to a particular matter or case.

- (3) The Service shall comply with any policy guidelines or directives given to it by the Minister under subsection (1) or (2) or cause same to be complied with (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 43 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 44: Power to make regulations.

- (1) The Service may, with the approval of the Minister make regulations as it deems expedient to give full effect to the provisions of this Bill.
- (2) The Service may, with the approval of the Minister make regulations specifically —
- (a) to set out the scales of charges permitted under section 40(2) of this Bill for services rendered by the Service;
 - (b) to prescribe the type of signals, audible or visual, to be used on fire engines or other mobile fire-fighting equipment;
 - (c) on the establishment and good management of canteens and recreation rooms for the benefit of the Service;
 - (d) to require owners of multiple dwellings, cinemas, theatres, office buildings and other buildings, structures or places to which the public resort to, to take such precautions as the Minister may specify for the safety against fire hazards of the tenants, occupiers, invitees or other users of such buildings, structures or places as contained in this Bill or in the National Fire Safety Code; and
 - (e) with respect to the —
 - (i) prevention of fire, the reduction of the risk of fire and the safety of persons or animals in or near any building, or class of building from fire hazards,
 - (ii) prohibition or control of the use, in the erection, alteration, improvement or repair of any building, other structure, or materials deemed by the Minister to constitute a fire hazard, and
 - (iii) use or proposed use of a building, other structure, location or otherwise of any material in the erection, alteration, improvement or repair of any building or other structure which the Minister thinks may constitute a fire hazard.
- (3) The Minister may for the purposes of this Bill, classify the buildings, structures or places referred to in subsection (2), into different categories, and each category may be subject to different safety requirements.
- (4) The Minister may give directives to the Controller-General to —
- (a) limit the number of persons who occupy or use any building, structure or place at any time;
 - (b) require the owners to install fire-fighting equipment of such standard as the Minister may prescribe; and

- (c) regulate the use of any building, structure or place in such a way that at all times the tenants, occupiers, invitees or users shall have free access to fire-fighting equipment.
- (5) The contravention of any regulation issued under any of the provisions of this Bill shall constitute an offence and shall be punishable as may be prescribed in the particular regulation (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 44 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 45: Standing orders.

- (1) The Controller-General may, with the approval of the Minister, make standing orders with respect to —
 - (a) international, national and service awards to officers and men of the Service;
 - (b) description and issue of fire-fighting and fire prevention equipment, accoutrements, uniforms and other necessities to be supplied to the Service; and
 - (c) the management and good governance of fire stations, training schools, recreation centres and canteens.
- (2) The standing orders made under subsection (1), shall be binding on all Service personnel and all persons undergoing training (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 45 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 46: Affixing of fire signage.

- (1) Any signage or mark indicating the location of any fire hydrant or other water supply as required or prescribed by this Bill may be affixed or placed on any land or other property for the purposes of this Bill without the consent of the owner of the land or other property and without compensation.
- (2) For the purposes of this section —
 - "mark" includes any notice, tablet, plate, pillar, post or other distinguishing signs;
 - "land" includes buildings, walls or fences; and
 - "owner" includes any lessee, tenant, licensee or occupier (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 46 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 47: Repeal.

The Fire Service Act, Cap. F29, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 is repealed (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 47 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 48: Savings.

- (1) Without prejudice to the provisions of the Interpretation Act, nothing in this Bill shall invalidate or otherwise affect anything done or purported to be done under the repealed Act.
- (2) As from the commencement of this Bill —
 - (a) all assets, rights, liabilities and obligations which immediately before the commencement of this Bill, were assets, rights, liabilities and obligations of the Service shall by virtue of this Bill, be taken over by the Service; and
 - (b) anything made, done or having effect under the repealed Act, shall be treated, as if it were made or done by the Service established under this Bill.
- (3) Any person who immediately before the commencement of this Bill was appointed or employed by the Fire Service established under the repealed Act shall continue in office and be deemed to have been appointed or employed by the Service (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 48 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 49: Interpretation.

In this Bill —

"appropriate authority" includes a Fire and Rescue Service of a State, Local Government or of other corporate entity, which has responsibility and mandate to provide fire and rescue services in a particular State, area, property or premises (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "appropriate authority" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Board" means the Civil Defence, Correctional, Fire and Immigration Services Board (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Board" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"building" includes any building, structure, place or any multiple dwelling (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "building" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Council" means the National Council on Fire and Rescue chaired by the Minister responsible for fire and rescue services (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Council" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"court" means a court of competent jurisdiction (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "court" be as defined in the interpretation to

this Bill — Agreed to.

"fire authority" means any State or local authority or other body responsible under any law for the provision of fire-fighting or fire protection services in any State or part of a State (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "fire authority" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"fire engine" means any vehicle used for the carriage of members of the Service, fire-fighting or rescue equipment (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "fire engine" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"fire-fighting equipment" means any fire engine, mobile fire-fighting equipment, fire extinguisher, fire prevention and escape, fire alarm, fire hydrant, fire hydrant cover or any post, pillar, plate, tablet, other mark used to indicate the position of a fire hydrant or other source of water or any equipment so prescribed (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "fire-fighting equipment" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"major disaster" means any flood, fire, hurricane, earthquake, storm or other catastrophe in any part of the Federation which in the determination of the local fire authority or any relevant authority threatens to be of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant assistance by the Service to supplement the efforts and available resources of the fire authority and local fire-fighting services in alleviating the damage, hardship and suffering caused by the disaster (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "major disaster" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Minister" means the Minister charged with responsibility for matters relating to fire-fighting and fire protection (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Minister" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"mobile fire-fighting equipment" means any fire-fighting equipment, not being a fire engine, so constructed as to be movable from place to place on a wheel (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "mobile fire-fighting equipment" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"multiple dwelling" means a building constructed or adapted to be let in separate portions for purposes of residence to more than six separate tenants or occupiers under separate agreements whether verbal or written, and includes a hotel, guest house, rest-house or other buildings used for similar purposes (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "multiple dwelling" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"owner" includes lessee, licensee and occupier (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "owner" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"property" includes land; and (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "property" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Service" means the Federal Fire and Rescue Service established under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Service" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 49 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 50: Citation.

This Bill may be cited as the Federal Fire and Rescue Service (Establishment) Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 50 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

SCHEDULE

Section 5 (2)

DEPARTMENTS OF THE FEDERAL FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

The departments referred to in section 5 (2) of this Bill include the —

- (a) Administration and Supply Department;
- (b) Operations Department;
- (c) Inspectorate, Investigation and Enforcement Department;
- (d) Policy, Planning, Research and Statistics Department;
- (e) Finance and Accounts Department; and
- (f) National Fire Academy Department (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the provisions of the Schedule stand part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Fire Service Act, Cap. F29, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Federal Fire and Rescue Service (Establishment) Act, 2023; and for Related Matters (HB. 211) (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Repeal the Fire Service Act, Cap. F29, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Enact the Federal Fire and Rescue Service (Establishment) Bill, 2023; and for Related Matters (HB. 211), approved Clauses 1 - 8, approved Clause 9 as amended, approved Clauses 10 - 50, the Schedule, and the Long Title of the Bill.

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

- (ii) ***A Bill for an Act to Establish a National Centre for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria; and for Related Matters. (HB. 207) (Committee of the Whole):***

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the House do consider the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish a National Centre for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria; and for Related Matters. (HB. 207)” (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

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)

A BILL FOR AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
THE COORDINATION AND CONTROL OF THE PROLIFERATION OF
SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN NIGERIA;
AND FOR RELATED MATTERS (HB. 207)

PART I — OBJECTIVES AND APPLICATION**Clause 1: Objectives of this Bill.**

The objectives of this Bill are to —

- (a) control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria;
- (b) provide a framework for the coordination, implementation and monitoring of all efforts geared towards the control of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria; and
- (c) prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small-arms and light weapons (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 1 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 2: Application.

This Bill shall apply throughout the Federal Republic of Nigeria (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 2 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART II — ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL CENTRE
FOR THE CONTROL OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Clause 3: Establishment of the National Centre for the control of small arms and light weapons.

- (1) There is established a National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, ("the National Centre") which shall be coordinated by the Office of the National Security Adviser.
- (2) The Office of the National Security Adviser (in this Bill referred to as "ONSA") shall —
 - (a) coordinate and implement the provisions of this Bill;
 - (b) be responsible for —
 - (i) policy formulation, coordination and monitoring of effort to address small arms and light weapons related issues within Nigeria,
 - (ii) monitoring of effort to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and
 - (iii) providing regular briefings and reports to the Government on the progress and challenges of the implementation of the national policy and strategy on small arms and light weapons, with the aim of facilitating the necessary political will, understanding and support for activities and programmes dealing with small arms and light weapons (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 3 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 4: Functions and powers of the National Centre.

The Centre shall —

- (a) implement strategies, plans and policies for the eradication of proliferation of small arms and light weapons;
- (b) supervise the implementation of the strategies, plan and policies for the eradication of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, by law enforcement agencies and other relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies in Nigeria;
- (c) receive from the Nigeria Police reports of activities on registration and licensing of fire arms and ammunition for the purposes of updating the national database;
- (d) register and securely store or destroy small arms —
 - (i) collected from the Nigeria Police Force, Armed Forces and other security agencies, and
 - (ii) seized or recovered from criminal's, terrorist, insurgents and any other person in possession of illegal small arms and light weapons;
- (e) organize programmes of action to prevent, control, combat and eradicate the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons;

- (f) coordinate the design and implementation of an effective public education and awareness campaign relative to small arms and light weapons;
- (g) create and maintain a national database of all small arms and light weapons (SALW);
- (h) update the register of small arms and light weapons and transmit same to the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) and any other international organization that may so require;
- (i) advise the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), the African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN) on exemptions to be granted to member states for weapons of categories 1, 2 and 3 of the ECOWAS Protocol on SALW to meet legitimate national defence and security needs, or to participate in peace keeping or other operations in accordance with the decisions of the United Nations, African Union, Economic Community of West African States or other regional or sub-regional body of which it is a member;
- (j) liaise with the Economic Community of West African States, African Union, United Nations in all matters relating to the eradication of proliferation of small arms and light weapons in general at the regional, continental and global levels;
- (k) initiate and develop mechanisms for exchanging information and experience with the National Centres, Commissions or National coordinating bodies for the eradication of proliferation of small arms and light weapons of other member states of the Economic Community of West African States, African Union and United Nations;
- (l) conduct periodic research, studies and surveys to gather accurate information on impacts of interventions, to track the mutating dimension of the problem of small arms and light weapons and the lessons learned; and to use such information;
- (m) investigate suspected illegal manufacturers, traders and possessors of illicit small arms and light weapons; and
- (n) perform such other functions that may be assigned to it by Federal Government of Nigeria (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 4 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART III — MANAGEMENT AND STAFF

Clause 5: Director General of the Centre.

- (1) There shall be for the Centre, a Director-General to be appointed by the President, on the recommendation of the National Security Adviser.
- (2) The Director-General shall:
 - (a) be the chief executive and accounting officer of the National Centre;
 - (b) be experienced in matters relating to small arms and light weapons;

- (c) be responsible for the day-to-day administration and management of the National Centre and the keeping of books and records of the National Centre;
 - (d) ensure that, in conducting its affairs, the National Centre is guided by the laws of Nigeria and international best practices which shall include the development and implementation of information security measures, technical and administrative competence, and the principles of impartiality, confidentiality, objectivity and integrity;
 - (e) formulate and develop an efficient and performance driven administration;
 - (f) the control and maintenance of discipline of staff; and
 - (g) perform such other functions as are assigned to him under this Bill or any other law.
- (3) The National Security Adviser may give to the Director-General general directions as to the management of the affairs of the National Centre and other matters relating to the functions of the National Centre.
- (4) The Director-General shall be appointed into office for a term of five years in the first instance and may subject to satisfactory performance, be re-appointed for a further term of five years and no more.
- (5) The Director-General shall cease to hold office if any of the following conditions apply:
 - (a) his term has expired;
 - (b) he resigns his office by notice in writing under his hand addressed to the President through the National Security Adviser;
 - (c) he dies;
 - (d) he becomes of unsound mind or incapable of carrying out his duties;
 - (e) he becomes bankrupt;
 - (f) he is found guilty of gross misconduct relating to his duties;
 - (g) he ceases to hold the office on the basis of which was appointed;
 - (j) the President is satisfied that it is not in the interest of the Center or of the public for the person appointed to continue in office.
- (6) The salary and emoluments of the Director-General of the National Centre shall be equivalent to that of a Permanent Secretary in the public service of the Federation.
- (7) All departments shall render such assistance as may be reasonably required in the exercise, performance or carrying out of the powers, functions and duties conferred on, assigned to or imposed on the Director-General by or under this Bill.

- (8) (a) The management team of the Centre shall be composed of relevant security and intelligence agencies as may be deemed appropriate.
- (b) The management team of the Centre shall comprise officers from —
- (i) the Nigerian Army;
 - (ii) the Nigerian Navy;
 - (iii) the Nigerian Air Force;
 - (iv) the Nigerian Police;
 - (v) the State Security Service;
 - (vi) the Nigerian Immigration Services;
 - (vii) the Nigerian Custom Services;
 - (viii) Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps;
 - (ix) Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
 - (x) Federal Ministry of Justice;
 - (xi) any other relevant Security and Intelligence Agency/Ministry;
 - (xii) any staff of the Centre with relevant and appropriate qualification and experience (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 5 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 6: Delegation of power by the Director-General.

- (1) The Director-General may:
- (a) delegate, in writing, any of his powers under this Bill to a Director of the Centre; or
 - (b) instruct any other employee to perform any of the functions assigned to the Centre under this Bill.
- (2) A delegation or instruction under subsection (1) of this section:
- (a) is subject to the limitations or conditions that the Director-General may impose; and
 - (b) does not relieve the Director-General of the ultimate responsibility concerning the exercise of the delegated power or the performance of the assigned function.
- (3) The Director-General may confirm, vary or revoke any decision taken by an employee in consequence of a delegation or instruction under subsection (1) of this section, as long as no such variation or revocation of a decision

detracts from any rights or contractual obligations that may have accrued as a result of the decision (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Amendment Proposed:

In Subclause (2) (a), immediately after the word “impose”, *insert* the words “in line with extant laws” (*Hon. Jesse Okey-Joe Onuakalasi — Oshodi/Isolo II Federal Constituency*).

Question that the amendment be made — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 6 as amended, stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 7: Appointment of staff.

- (1) The Centre may, from time to time, appoint directly, or on secondment from law enforcement and security agencies, Ministries or private sector, such professional, technical and other staff as it may consider necessary to assist in the effective and efficient performance of its functions under this Bill.
- (2) For the purposes of this Bill, a public officer who is transferred or seconded to the Centre under subsection (1) of this section shall be regarded as a staff of the Centre and be subject only to the control and direction of the Centre.
- (3) The Director-General of the Centre shall, with the approval of National Security Adviser make staff regulations and determine conditions of service, including allowances, pensions and other benefits and disciplinary control, as are appropriate for its employees.
- (4) The Centre shall publish regulations made under subsection (4) of this section in such manner as it may determine.
- (5) The Centre shall, for the purpose of achieving maximum efficiency in the discharge of its functions set out in this Bill, institute schemes for the training of its staff (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 7 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 8: Security screening of staff.

- (1) A person, other than the Director-General, shall not be appointed or seconded to perform any of the functions of the Centre unless information with respect to that person has been gathered in a security screening investigation by the State Security Service;
- (2) All staff of the Centre shall be subjected to periodic security screening (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 8 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 9: Salaries and emoluments.

There shall be paid to every member and staff of the Centre such salaries and emoluments as the National Salaries, Income and Wages Commission may from time to time direct (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 9 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 10: Pensionable service.

- (1) Service in the Centre is pensionable service for purposes of the Pension Reform Act, 2004 and accordingly, employees of the Centre shall, in respect

of their services, be entitled to pensions and other retirement benefits as are enjoyed by persons holding equivalent grades in the public service of the Federation.

- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, nothing in this Bill shall prevent the appointment of a person to any office on terms which preclude the grant of pension in respect of that office.
- (3) For the purpose of the application of the provisions of the Pension Reform Act, any powers exercisable by a Minister or other authority of the Government of the Federation (not being the power to make regulations under section 97 under that Act) are hereby vested in and shall be exercisable by the Director General of the Centre (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 10 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 11: Establishment of offices in the six (6) geo-political zones.

The Centre shall have offices in each of the six (6) geo-political zones and in each State of the Federation (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 11 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 12: Establishment of departments and special units.

The Centre shall establish Departments and Special Units for the effective and efficient discharge of its functions and powers under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 12 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART IV — FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Clause 13: Funds of the National Centre.

- (1) There shall be established for the Centre a fund which shall be applied towards the discharge of its functions and duties under this Bill and into which shall be credited:
 - (a) take off grants and annual subventions received from the Government of the Federation;
 - (b) budgetary allocations approved by the National Assembly for the purpose of the Centre;
 - (c) grants, gifts or donations from international organizations and donor agencies, provided that the terms and conditions attached to a grant, gift or donation are not inconsistent with the functions of the Centre;
 - (d) charges, fees and other sums collected or received for services rendered by the Centre; and
 - (e) all other funds which may, from time to time, accrue to the Centre.
- (2) The fund established pursuant to subsection (1) of this section shall be managed in accordance with extant Financial Regulations applicable in the public service of the Federation (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 13 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 14: Expenditure of the National Centre.

The Centre shall apply the proceeds of the fund established pursuant to section 11 (1) of this Bill for the following purposes:

- (a) the cost of administration of the National Centre;
- (b) the reimbursement of members of the Centre or any committee set up by the National Centre for such expenses as may be authorized in accordance with the rates approved by the Government of the Federation;
- (c) the payments of salaries, fees and other remunerations or allowances shall be as approved by the National Salaries, Incomes and Wages Commission (NSIWC);
- (d) the maintenance of any property acquired or vested in the Centre; and
- (e) any matter connected with all or any of the functions of the Centre (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 14 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 15: Estimates, accounts and audit.

- (1) The Centre shall not later than 30 August of each year, submit to the National Security Adviser for approval its estimates of income and expenditure for the next financial year.
- (2) The Centre shall:
 - (a) keep proper records and accounts of its incomes and expenditures;
 - (b) prepare a statement of accounts in respect of each year; and
 - (c) ensure that the bank accounts are held with reputable banks.
- (3) The Centre shall, within five months into the new financial year, submit its audited accounts to the Auditor-General of the Federation (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 15 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 16: Annual report.

The Centre shall, not later than six months after the end of each year, submit through the National Security Adviser to the President, a report of its activities including evaluation reports received and of money laundering, terrorist financing trends and its administration during the preceding year (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 16 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART V — LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST THE NATIONAL CENTRE

Clause 17: Limitation of suits against the National Centre.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this Bill, the provisions of the Public Officers' Protection Act (Cap. P41, LFN, 2004) apply in relation to any suit instituted against the Director-General or an employee of the Centre.

- (2) Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law or enactment, no suit shall lie or be instituted in any court against the Director-General or an employee of the National Centre for any act done in pursuance of this Bill or any other law or enactment on money laundering or terrorist financing or of any public duty or authority or in respect of any alleged neglect or default in the execution of this Bill or such other law or enactment, duty or authority, unless:
- (a) it is commenced within three months after the act, neglect or default complained of; or
- (b) in the case of a continuation of damage or injury, within 6 months after its cessation.
- (3) No suit shall be commenced against the Director-General or an employee of the Centre before the expiration of 3 months after written notice of the intention to commence the suit shall have been served on the Centre by the intending plaintiff or his agent (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 17 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 18: Service of documents.

A notice, summons or other documents required or authorised to be served on the Centre under the provisions of this Bill or any other law or enactment may be served by delivering it to the Director-General, or by sending it by registered post and addressed to the head office of the National Centre (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 18 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 19: Restriction on execution against property of the National Centre.

- (1) In an action or a suit against the Centre, no execution or attachment process in any nature thereof shall be issued against the Centre unless not less than 3 months' notice of the intention to execute or attach has been given to the Centre.
- (2) Any sum of money which may by the judgment of any court be awarded against the Centre shall, subject to any direction given by the court, where no notice of appeal against the said judgment has been given, be paid from the fund of the Centre (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 19 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 20: Indemnity of officers.

The Director-General or an employee of the Centre shall be indemnified out of the assets of the National Centre against any proceedings brought against him in his capacity as the Director-General or as an employee of the Centre where the act complained of is not ultra vires his powers (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 20 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART VI — POSSESSION, SALE AND TRANSFER OF FIREARMS

Clause 21: Possession of firearms.

A person shall not have in his possession or under his control any firearm, or

ammunition for any firearm or any component part of such ammunition, in the following categories except in accordance with a licence granted by the President acting on the advice of the National Centre —

- (a) lethal barreled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged;
- (b) muzzle loading firearm of any category;
- (c) component of any firearms;
- (d) weapon from which a shot is discharged; or
- (e) weapon, rifle or pistol from which a projectile can be fired (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 21 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 22: Personal firearms.

- (1) A person shall not have in his possession or under his control any firearm of one of the categories specified in section 5 of this Bill ("personal firearm") except in accordance with a licence granted in respect of it by the Inspector-General of Police, which licence shall be granted or refused in accordance with guidelines specified by the President on the advice of the National Centre.
- (2) The Inspector-General of Police shall provide to the National Centre —
 - (a) details of all licensed personal firearms; and
 - (b) monthly analysis on seizures of illegal weapons (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 22 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 23: Muzzle-loading firearms.

- (1) The Commissioner of Police of a State, with the consent of the Governor of the state may grant license for the possession or control of muzzle-loading firearm.
- (2) The Commissioner of Police of a state shall give monthly report of firearms licenced under the provisions of subsection (1) of this section to the National Centre.
- (3) The grant of a licence in respect of a muzzle-loading firearm in respect of which application has been duly made shall not be refused except for one of any reason specified by the President (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 23 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 24: Grant of licenses and permits.

- (1) Subject to the provisions of section 21 of this Bill and the Firearms Act, the authority having the function of granting a licence or permit may grant licence or permit to a person deemed fit.

- (2) The authority having the function of granting a licence or permit may, subject to the provisions of any regulations made under this Bill —
 - (a) impose such terms or conditions as deemed fit; or
 - (b) revoke a licence or permit for such cause as he may consider appropriate.
- (3) A person whose application for licence or permit is refused by the Police authority other than a decision by the President, may appeal in writing to the President through the National Centre, whose decision shall be final.
- (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 20 and 21 of this Bill, no licence or permit under the provisions of this Bill shall be granted if there is reason to believe that the applicant or holder of the licence —
 - (a) is under the age of 21;
 - (b) is of unsound mind;
 - (c) is not fit to have possession of the firearm in question on account of defective eyesight;
 - (d) is a person of intemperate habits; or
 - (e) has been previously convicted of an offence involving violence or the threat of violence.
- (5) The Inspector General of Police or the Commissioner of Police of a State shall provide details of —
 - (a) rejected applications for licence or permit to the National Centre within one month of the rejection; and
 - (b) revoked licences to the National Centre within one month of the revocation (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 24 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 25: Safe custody of firearms.

- (1) The owner of a firearm in respect of which a licence or permit has been granted in accordance with the provisions of this Bill shall be responsible for the safe custody of the firearm to which the licence or permit relates.
- (2) The owner of a firearm, in the case of loss, theft or destruction of the firearm, shall —
 - (a) notify such loss, theft or destruction and the circumstances of it within 14 days to the authority who issued the licence or permit, surrender the licence or permit; and
 - (b) do such other action as the authority may consider necessary.
- (3) Where the holder of a licence or permit dies! a person lawfully in possession of the chattels of the deceased or a person to whom a firearm or ammunition of the deceased has been bequeathed may notwithstanding any other

provision of this Bill, lawfully have in his possession a firearm or ammunition in respect of which the deceased person held a licence or permit for a period of 14 days after such death.

- (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, the Inspector-General of Police may, if he deems fit, seize the firearm or ammunition and retain or deposit same in a public armoury as provided in the Firearms Act, until a licence or permit is granted in respect of such firearm.
- (5) The occurrence of any of the situation provided in subsections (2), (3) and (4) of this section, shall be reported to the National Centre within 30 days for record and analysis (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 25 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 26: Ammunition.

- (1) A person shall not have in his possession or under his control any ammunition for any firearm and any component part of any ammunition or gun powder or trade powder intended or used as a component part, except in accordance with the terms of a license or permit granted to him and in respect of such firearm.
- (2) The provisions of sub-section (1) of this section shall apply in respect of all ammunition, except —
 - (a) lead shot for use only as a weight; or
 - (b) blank cartridges other than those for humane killers not exceeding 2.54 centimeters in diameter (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 26 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 27: Prohibition of dealing in arms or ammunition.

- (1) A person shall not buy, sell, transfer, expose for sale or transfer, or have in his possession for sale or transfer, any firearm unless the person is registered as a firearms dealer.
- (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, any application for registration as a firearm dealer shall be confirmed by the National Centre before approval.
- (3) The National Centre shall maintain a database of registered firearms dealers in Nigeria.
- (4) A person shall not buy, sell, transfer or expose for sale or transfer or have in his possession for sale or transfer any ammunition, except —
 - (a) the ammunition specified at section 5 (b) of this Bill or Part II of the Firearms Act; and
 - (b) he is registered as a firearms dealer.
- (5) The President may, upon the advice of the National Centre direct —

- (a) the registration of any person as a dealer in firearms; and
- (b) that any such registration of a dealer be cancelled (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 27 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 28: Registered dealer's armouries.

- (1) A registered firearms dealer shall —
 - (a) construct, in accordance with the requirements prescribed by Regulations pursuant to the Firearms Act, and maintain in proper repair, an armoury at each place in respect of which he carries on business;
 - (b) keep an up to date records of transactions at each place where he carries on business, and shall make such returns in respect of the records as may be prescribed by the National Centre;
 - (c) in the case of loss, theft or destruction of a firearm in his possession, shall notify such loss, theft or destruction within 7 days of the occurrence to the Inspector-General of Police and the National Centre, for record and analysis; and
 - (d) a registered firearms dealer shall permit inspection of each place where he carries on business and the records maintained, by a police officer, upon production by such police officer of the written authority of the Inspector-General of Police.
- (2) The National Centre —
 - (a) may conduct periodic inspection of registered firearms dealers armoury across Nigeria; and
 - (b) shall keep records of all registered dealers armoury across Nigeria (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 28 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 29: Sale or transfer of firearms or ammunition.

- (1) A person, whether a registered firearms dealer or not, shall not sell or transfer any firearm or ammunition to any person, except —
 - (a) another registered firearms dealer; or
 - (b) the person produced a licence or permit authorizing him to possess such firearm or ammunition.
- (2) Any regulations made under this Bill and pursuant to the Firearms Act may permit the sale or transfer of a firearm or ammunition by a registered firearms dealer to a person who is not the holder of a licence or permit intending to obtain such licence, upon conditions to be prescribed in such regulations (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 29 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 30: Stamping of all firearms sold.

- (1) A person, whether a registered firearms dealer or not, shall not sell or transfer any firearm unless —
 - (a) there is stamped permanently on it, the maker's name and number or such other particulars as may be prescribed; and
 - (b) the name or number is specified in any licence or permit produced in accordance with section 11 of the Firearms Act.
- (2) A person, whether a registered firearms dealer or not, shall not alter or render illegible the maker's name or number or other prescribed particulars stamped upon a firearm without the consent in writing of the Inspector General of Police.
- (3) Where the provisions of subsection (2) of this section is contravened, the inspector General of Police shall notify the National Centre for record and analysis (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 30 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 31: Collection and storage of small arms and light weapons.

- (1) The Centre shall have power to collect —
 - (a) small arms which are surplus to the national needs or have become obsolete;
 - (b) seized light weapons;
 - (c) unmarked light weapons;
 - (d) illegally held light weapons; and
 - (e) small arms collected in the implementation of peace accords or programmes for the voluntary handing over of the weapons.
- (2) A small arm or light weapon collected pursuant to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section shall be registered and securely stored or destroyed.
- (3) The Centre shall promote and carry out programmes of voluntary handing over of small arms and light weapons (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 31 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 32: Management and security of stockpiles.

- (1) The Centre shall take the necessary measures to ensure the safe and effective management, storage and security of national stocks of small arms and light weapons.
- (2) The Centre shall, pursuant to the provisions of subsection (1) of this section, establish effective standards and procedures for stockpile management, storage and security, including —
 - (a) appropriate site;

- (b) physical security measures of storage facilities;
 - (c) inventory management and record keeping;
 - (d) staff training;
 - (e) security during manufacture and transportation; and
 - (f) sanctions in case of theft or loss.
- (3) The Centre shall ensure that stockpiles of small arms and light weapons by manufacturers, dealers as well as individuals are securely stored in accordance with the appropriate standards and procedures (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 32 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART VII — REGISTER OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Clause 33: Establishment of register of small arms and light weapons.

- (1) The Centre shall keep and maintain a computerized register of small arms and light weapons and a comprehensive national database, in which shall be recorded the following information —
- (a) description of the product (type, model and caliber) and quality (where it concerns a batch);
 - (b) content of the marking;
 - (c) names and addresses of the former and current owners and, where possible, successive owners;
 - (d) date of registration; and
 - (e) information concerning each transaction, including —
 - (i) the name and address of the shipper, the intermediary (where applicable), the consignee and the user indicated on the end-user-certificate,
 - (ii) the point of departure, transit and destination, as well as the customs references and the dates of departure, transit and delivery to the end-user,
 - (iii) the export, transit and import licence (quantities and batches corresponding to the same licence as well as the validity of the licence),
 - (iv) full details concerning the method of transport and the transporter,
 - (v) the controlling agency or agencies at point of departure, transit and entry,
 - (vi) the nature of the transaction, whether commercial, non-commercial, private or public, conversion, repair, and

(vii) where applicable, the insurer and the financial institution intervening in the transaction.

(2) The records in the register of the National Centre shall also be kept in the custody of designated agencies (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 33 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 34: Register of arms for peace operations.

(1) The Centre shall —

(a) keep and maintain a register of small arms and light weapons destined for use in peacekeeping operations both within and outside the ECOWAS or AU territory to ensure the control of movements of small arms and light weapons and their effective withdrawal at the end of peace operations in which member;

(b) declare to the executive secretariat of ECOWAS, AU and UN organization of all small arms and light weapons —

(i) used in peace keeping operations, or

(ii) seized, collected or destroyed during peace keeping operations in Nigeria and in the ECOWAS or AU region.

(2) For the purpose of implementing the provisions of sub section (1) of this section —

(a) the Armed Forces, the Police and any other security agency engaged in peace keeping operations shall —

(i) prior to the commencement of the operation, submit to the National Centre a register or record of small arms and light weapons to be used in the operation, and

(ii) after the operation, submit to the National Centre a register or record of small arms and light weapons used in the operations or seized, collected or destroyed during the operations;

(b) the Centre may at any time necessary, request from the Armed Forces, the Police or any other security agency engaged in peace keeping operations, a register or record of small arms and light weapons to be used, used, seized, collected or destroyed during the operations;

(c) a register of small arms and light weapons used by arms bearing agencies shall be forwarded to the Centre quarterly; and

(d) a list of ammunitions before and after a peace keeping mission by arms bearing agencies shall be forwarded to the Centre (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 34 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 35: Small arms registry.

The Centre shall establish a National Small Arms Registry to be managed by an arms Registrar who shall —

- (a) keep, maintain and update, from time to time, the Registers established under this Bill;
- (b) transmit the Registers to the secretariat of the ECOWAS in accordance with the provisions of ECOWAS Convention; and
- (c) carry out any other responsibility in respect of small arms and light weapon record and documentation in the Nigeria (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 35 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART VIII — CONTROL OF THE MANUFACTURE
OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Clause 36: Control of the manufacture of small arms and light weapons.

(1) The Centre shall —

- (a) control the manufacture of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria;
- (b) regulate the activities of local and artisanal small arms and light weapons manufacturers; and
- (c) adopt strategies and policies for the reduction or limitation of the manufacture of small arms and light weapons so as to control the local manufacture as well as their market within ECOWAS.

(2) The Centre shall prepare and maintain an exhaustive list of local manufacturers of small arms and light weapons and ensure their registration in the Register of Small Arms and Light Weapons established under section 17 of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 36 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 37: Measures for the control of manufacture of small arms and light weapons.

The Centre shall not grant a request for the manufacture of small arms and light weapons except the manufacturer gives information relating to —

- (a) details of the arms to be manufactured and the quantity, exact type and kind of arms using ECOWAS classification system, including all serial numbers and other markings;
- (b) the procedure for marking and entering details of each small arm and light weapon into the Register of Small Arms and Light Weapons established under section 17 of this Bill; and
- (c) information on the storage and management of the small arms and light weapons after manufacture (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 37 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 38: Tracing.

- (1) The Centre shall exchange with other ECOWAS, AU and UN State Parties, information on —
 - (a) illegal small arms and light weapons;
 - (b) seized small arms and light weapons; and
 - (c) trafficking in weapons that contravene international law or the internal laws of the States in which the operations take place, including condemnation of the person or institution implicated, sanctions, disposal, destruction methods and neutralization.
- (2) The Centre shall, in the case of other small arms and light weapons, exchange the following data on a regular basis with the bodies mentioned in subsection (1) of this section —
 - (a) manufacture, marking system and techniques used, and authorized manufacturers;
 - (b) transfers, exports to and imports from all other States, and transits;
 - (c) information available concerning national legislation, existing practices and controls, authorized dealers and brokers; and
 - (d) existing stockpiles, management, inventory, security, surplus, loss, theft and destruction.
- (3) The Centre may initiate a tracing request through ECOWAS, AU or UN in relation to small arms and light weapons found within Nigeria that it considers to be illegal.
- (4) A request by the Centre for assistance in tracing illegal small arms or light weapons shall contain sufficient information, including —
 - (a) information describing the illegal nature of the small arms and light weapons, its legal justification and circumstances under which the small arms and light weapons were found;
 - (b) marking, type, caliber and other relevant information; and
 - (c) intended use of the information being sought.
- (5) Where the Centre receives through the ECOWAS, AU or UN request for assistance in tracing illegal small arms and light weapons found in the requesting member state, the Centre shall acknowledge its receipt within a reasonable time frame.
- (6) A request from a member State received under subsection (5) of this section shall contain the information set out in subsection (4) of this section and any other information as may be specified by the Centre.
- (7) The Centre shall provide reliable responses to tracing requests made by other member states within 1 month from the date of receipt of the request.
- (8) In responding to a tracing request, the Centre shall provide all available information sought by the requesting member State that is relevant for the purposes of tracing illegal small arms and light weapons.

- (9) The Centre may seek additional information from the requesting member state where a tracing request does not contain the information required under this section (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 38 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

PART IX — MISCELLANEOUS

Clause 39: Offences and penalties.

- (1) Any person in possession of firearms or ammunition without a licence shall on conviction be liable to not less than 2 years imprisonment or a fine of not less than ₦1,000,000.00 or both where the person has no previous criminal record.
- (2) Any person with previous criminal records found in possession of firearms without a licence shall on conviction be liable to not less than 5 years' imprisonment without fine.
- (3) Where a person commits an act of violence with a firearm that is not licenced such person shall on conviction be liable to not less than 6 years imprisonment.
- (4) A person who commits an offence under this Bill for which no penalty is prescribed shall be liable on conviction to not less than 1-year imprisonment or a fine of not less than ₦500,000.00 or both (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 39 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 40: Prosecution.

Subject to the provisions of section 174 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (which relates to the power of the Attorney- General of the Federation to institute, continue or discontinue criminal proceedings against any person in any court of law), any legal officer of the Centre may conduct criminal and other proceedings in respect of matters relating to small arms and other related matters (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 40 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 41: Public education and awareness programme.

- (1) The Centre shall, in the interest of promoting peace, design public and community education and awareness programmes at national, state and local levels in order to involve Nigerians in the efforts to control the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.
- (2) The Centre shall, in pursuance of subsection (1) of this section, develop and partner with civil society organizations at national, state and local levels, including women, youth and other organisations, for better information and public awareness on the danger of proliferation of small arms and light weapons (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 41 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 42: Directives of the President.

The President may give to the National Security Adviser such directives of a general nature or relating specifically to matters of policy, with regards to the exercise of the

functions of the Centre as he may consider necessary and the Centre shall comply with the directives (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 42 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 43: Regulations.

The National Centre may, subject to the approval of the National Assembly, make regulations and issue guidelines as are necessary or expedient for the effective and efficient implementation of the provisions of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 43 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 44: Dissolution of the presidential committee for the control of small arms and light weapons.

As from the commencement of this Bill, the Presidential Committee for the Control of Small Arms and light Weapons (PRESCOM) constituted by the President is hereby dissolved (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 44 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 45: Savings and transitional provisions.

- (1) The dissolution of PRESCOM as specified in section 34 of this Bill shall not affect anything done or purported to have been done by the PRESCOM.
- (2) The right, interest, obligation, proceedings, assets and liability of the PRESCOM existing before the commencement of this Bill shall by virtue of this Bill be deemed to be that of the Centre, to the extent that they are not inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Bill.
- (3) Any reference to the PRESCOM or any person under its control or a document issued in the name of the PRESCOM shall be read, unless the context otherwise requires, as a reference to the Centre established under this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 45 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 46: Interpretation.

In this Bill —

"AU" means the African Union (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the abbreviation "AU" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Convention" means the Economic Community of West African States Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, done at Abuja on 14 June, 2006 (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Convention" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"ECOWAS" means the Economic Community of West African States (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "ECOWAS" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"illicit" means all that is carried out in violation of this Bill and the Convention (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "illicit" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"light weapons" means portable arms designed to be used by several persons working together in a team and include notably —

- (a) heavy machine guns;
- (b) portable grenade launchers, mobile or mounted;
- (c) portable anti-aircraft cannons;
- (d) portable anti-tank cannons, non-recoil guns,
- (e) portable anti-tank missile launchers or rocket launchers; and
- (f) mortars with a caliber of less than one hundred millimeters (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "light weapons" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"marking" means inscriptions permitting the identification of arms covered by this Bill and the Convention (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "marking" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"Centre" means National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons established under section 3 of this Bill (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word "Centre" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"other related materials" means all components, parts or spare parts for small arms or light weapons or ammunition necessary for its functioning; or any chemical substance serving as active material used as propelling or explosive agent (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words "other related materials" be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"small arms" means arms used by one person and include —

- (a) firearms and other destructive arms or devices such as an exploding bomb, an incendiary bomb or a gas bomb, a grenade, a rocket launcher, a missile system or landmine;
- (b) revolvers and pistols with automatic loading;
- (c) rifles and carbines;
- (d) machine guns;

(e) assault rifles; and

(f) light machine guns (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words “small arms” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"small arms and light weapons" includes ammunition and other related materials (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words “small arms and light weapons” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"tracing" includes the systematic monitoring of the movement of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition and other related materials, from the manufacturer until the end user, with a view to helping members states or competent authorities to detect illegal manufacture and trading; and (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the word “tracing” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

"weapons of categories 1, 2 and 3" means light weapons, small arms and ammunition, respectively (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that the meaning of the words “weapons of categories 1, 2, and 3” be as defined in the interpretation to this Bill — Agreed to.

Question that Clause 46 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Clause 47: Citation.

This Bill may be cited as the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons Bill, 2023 (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Question that Clause 47 stands part of the Bill — Agreed to.

Explanatory Memorandum:

(This memorandum does not form part of the Bill but is intended to explain its purport)

This Bill seeks to provide for the control of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria and the establishment of a Centre to coordinate and implement activities to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Nigeria in line with the UN, AU, ECOWAS Convention and other international instruments and Protocols on small arms and light weapons (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Long Title:

A Bill for an Act to Establish A National Centre for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria; and for Related Matters (HB. 207) (*Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader*).

Agreed to.

Chairman to report Bill.

(HOUSE IN PLENARY)

Mr Deputy Speaker in the Chair, reported that the House in Committee of the Whole considered the Report on a Bill for an Act to Establish a National Centre for the Coordination and Control of the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Nigeria; and for Related Matters (HB. 207) and approved Clauses 1- 5, approved Clause 6 as amended, approved Clauses 7 - 47, the Explanatory Memorandum, and the Long Title of the Bill.

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

24. Adjournment

That the House do adjourn till Wednesday, 11 October, 2023 at 11.00 a.m. (Hon. Julius Ihonvbere — House Leader).

The House adjourned accordingly at 3.11 p.m.

Benjamin Okezie Kalu
Deputy Speaker