



CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILLS

Townhall Dialogue Session on Constitution Alteration Bills

Theme: Constitution Amendment Proposals Ahead of Legislative Voting

Date: Thursday, 16 April 2026

This document provides a plain-language summary of the constitutional amendment bills to be discussed at the townhall. Each summary identifies the constitutional sections affected and the key objective of the proposed change.

ELECTORAL REFORMS

1. **State Independent Electoral Commission (SIEC) Reform**

Provides additional criteria for SIEC members' appointment (minimum age 25, integrity, non-partisanship) and expands SIEC functions to include voter education, campaign monitoring, insulating SIEC from the control of governors.

2. **Independent Candidacy**

Amends Sections 7, 65 (2), 106(2), 131(2), 177(2) and 228 to allow individuals without party sponsorship to contest for President, Governor, National Assembly, State Assembly, and Local Government Council seats as independent candidates, subject to verified signature thresholds, and empowers INEC to prescribe fees for independent candidacy applications

3. **Electoral Offences Commission**

Amends Sections 84, 153, 160 and Third Schedule to establish a dedicated Electoral Offences Commission with powers to investigate and prosecute electoral crimes, independent of the existing INEC structure.

JUDICIAL REFORMS

4. **Expedited Hearing of Election Petitions (Bill 27)**

Amends Sections 232, 233, 239, 246, 285 and the Sixth Schedule to streamline election dispute processes. Grants the Supreme Court exclusive jurisdiction over presidential petitions, the Court of Appeal original jurisdiction over governorship petitions, and makes Court of Appeal decisions on tribunal appeals and pre-election matters final. Reduces the timeline for deciding both pre-election and post-election cases at the trial level from 180 days to 60 days.

5. **Regulation of Supreme Court & Court of Appeal Jurisdiction (Bill 28)**

Amends Sections 230, 234 and 237 to confirm the Chief Justice of Nigeria's headship of the judiciary, sets a 360-day timeline for Supreme Court appeals, and mandates a Court of Appeal division in every State to improve access to appellate justice.

6. **Direct Funding of Federal & State Courts (Bill 29)**

Amends Section 162 so that payments from the Federation Account flow directly to all federal and state courts via the National Judicial Council (NJC), protecting state courts from executive financial interference.

7. **Supreme Court as a Court of Policy (Bill 30)**

Amends Section 233 to reduce the Supreme Court's appellate jurisdiction by restricting appeals to constitutional matters and capital offences, freeing the court to focus on policy and constitutional adjudication.

8. Judicial Succession & Removal Safeguards (Bill 31)

Amends Sections 231, 238, 249, 250, 254B, 256 and 292 to set mandatory NJC timelines for filling judicial vacancies (three months for the Supreme Court and two months for other superior courts of record) to prevent prolonged vacancy-induced disruption; and a requirement that legislative removal addresses for judicial officers be supported by NJC/JSC memoranda to prevent politically motivated removals.

9. Composition of the National Judicial Council (Bill 32)

Amends paragraph 20 of the Third Schedule to mandate that the five NBA members on the Council include at least one Senior Advocate of Nigeria and one woman.

10. Judicial Officers' Pensions & Remuneration (Bill 33)

Amends Section 291 (2) guaranteeing a pension for life equivalent to annual salary of equivalent office holder (with allowances) for those who served as a judicial officer of a superior court of record for at least 10 years and retired at 65 or above.

11. Expanded Court Jurisdictions & Criminal Matters (Bill 34)

Amends Sections 251, 253, 254C, 254E, 258 and 273 to grant the Federal High Court, High Court of the FCT and High Courts of States concurrent jurisdiction over electoral offences; allow elevated Federal High Court Judges to conclude pending criminal matters; and broadens the National Industrial Court's jurisdiction to include minimum wage across all levels of government.

LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

12. Legislative Bureaucracy (National & State Assembly Service Commissions)

Amends Sections 51, 93, 153, 157, 158, 197, 201, 202 and Third Schedule to formally embed the National Assembly Service Commission and State Houses of Assembly Service Commissions in the Constitution. Establishes the office of Clerk of the National Assembly and State Houses of Assembly as head of legislative service of the Federation and State respectively.

13. Appropriation Bill Deadline (Bill 23)

Amends Sections 81 and 121 to set a clear constitutional deadline for when annual budgets must be laid before the National and State Assemblies. It is to be laid at least 60 days before the end of the preceding financial year, standardizing a January–December budget cycle.

14. Inauguration of New Lawmakers (Bill 24)

Amends Sections 52, 64, 94 and 105 to fill the constitutional gap on inaugurating legislators elected in bye-elections or after the initial assembly inauguration, and fixes the commencement date for the first sessions of the National Assembly (second Tuesday in June) and State Houses.

15. Removal of State Assembly Presiding Officers (Bill 25)

Amends Section 92 to introduce clear procedural safeguards, including specified grounds, timelines, and hearing requirements, for the removal of Speaker and Deputy Speaker of State Houses of Assembly.

16. Removal of Executive Transitional Law-Making Powers (Bill 26)

Proposes to delete Section 315 of the Constitution, stripping the Executive branch of transitional law-making powers granted to the Executive in the 1999 Constitution.

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE & CITIZENSHIP

17. Citizenship Rights for Spouses of Nigerian Women

Amends Section 26 to extend the right to acquire Nigerian citizenship by marriage to foreign spouses of Nigerian women, promoting equality with existing provisions available to spouses of Nigerian men.

18. Citizenship by Investment

Amends Section 28 to create a new citizenship class for foreign nationals who invest above a specified financial threshold or in strategic sectors critical to national development.

19. Special Seats for Women in the Legislature

Amends multiple sections (section 48, 49, 71, 72, 77, 91, 113, 117, etc.) to create additional/special seats in the National and State Houses of Assembly for women as a temporary measure to address women under-representation in elective offices.

HUMAN RIGHTS

20. Definition of Torture & Degrading Treatment (Bill 35)

Amends Section 34 to explicitly include the public parade or display of persons arrested by law enforcement within the constitutional definition of torture, inhuman, and degrading treatment.

21. Rights of Unborn Children of Women Convicted of Capital Offence (Bill 36)

Amends Section 33 to explicitly protect the rights of unborn children carried by women sentenced to death. Where a woman convicted of a capital offence is pregnant, her sentence shall be commuted from death sentence to life imprisonment.

22. Right to a Clean & Healthy Environment (Bill 37)

Amends Sections 33 and 34 to enshrine every Nigerian's right to a clean, safe, and healthy environment as a fundamental constitutional right, integrating environmental protection into the right to life and human dignity.

STRENGTHENING OF INSTITUTIONS

23. Federal Civil Service Commission Representation

Amends Third Schedule Part 1 to expand the Federal Civil Service Commission so that each of the 36 states and the FCT has at least one representative.

24. Local Government Representation in State Assemblies

Amends Section 91 to raise the maximum membership of State Houses of Assembly from 24 to 44, guaranteeing that every Local Government Council in each state has at least one representative.

25. Separation of Attorney-General from Minister/Commissioner of Justice

Amends Sections 150, 174, 195, 211, 318 and Third Schedule Part 1 to clearly separate the office of Attorney-General from that of Minister/Commissioner of Justice at both federal and state levels.

26. Separation of Governor and Deputy Governor Qualifications

Amends Section 187 to prevent the office of Governor from being invalidated solely because a Deputy Governor is disqualified or removed by a court.

TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS

27. State Council of Traditional Rulers (Bill 41)

Amends Sections 197 and the Third Schedule to formally establish State Councils of Traditional Rulers, integrating traditional leadership into the national governance framework.

28. Statutory Funding for Traditional Institutions (Bill 42)

Amends Section 162 to provide a stable, constitutionally guaranteed source of funding for traditional institutions across Nigeria.

SECURITY & STATE POLICING

29. **State and Community Police (Bill 20)**

Amends Sections 214 and 318 to authorize the establishment of State and Community Police forces.

30. **Financial Independence of the Armed Forces (Bill 21)**

Amends Section 81 to provide the Armed Forces of the Federation with direct, constitutionally guaranteed financial independence, establishing a first line charge from the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

DEVOLUTION OF POWERS

31. **Road Construction to Concurrent List (Bill 38)**

Moves the responsibility for constructing and maintaining non-federal (non-Trunk A) roads to the Concurrent Legislative List, enabling both federal and state governments to legislate and fund road infrastructure.

32. **Tourism on the Concurrent List (Bill 39)**

Adds tourism and tourism-related matters to the Concurrent Legislative List, allowing state governments to co-legislate on tourism development alongside the federal government.

33. **Quarantine: Exclusive to Concurrent List (Bill 40)**

Moves 'quarantine' from the Exclusive Legislative List to the Concurrent List, enabling states to act swiftly and independently in managing disease outbreaks and public health emergencies.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT & FISCAL REFORMS

34. **Mandatory Financial Statements Submission to Auditor-General (Bill 43)**

Amends Sections 85 and 125 to require all government statutory corporations, commissions, agencies, and authorities to submit annual financial statements to the Auditor-General within a set timeframe, boosting transparency and fiscal accountability. The Auditor-General is to submit a list of the bodies that do not comply to the National Assembly, and their budgets will not be approved for the following year.

35. **Public Disclosure of Accountant-General Report by Auditor-General (Bill 44)**

Amends Sections 85 and 125 to mandate the public publication of Auditor-General reports at both federal and state levels, enabling citizen oversight of government finances.

36. **Local Government as Third Tier of Government**

Amends Sections 2, 4, 5, 7, 162 and 318 to firmly entrench Local Governments as the third tier of the federation, with clear powers, responsibilities, and protections from undue executive interference.

37. **Auditors-General for Local Governments (Bill 2)**

Amends Section 127 to establish the Office of the Auditors-General for Local Governments and FCT Area Councils, defining their powers and duties in auditing local government finances.