

COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (NEC) MEETING OF NIGERIA UNION OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS WORKERS (NUPENG) HELD IN PORT HARCOURT ON DECEMBER, 2, 2017

In line with the constitutional provisions of the union, the National Executive Council meeting (NEC) of NUPENG was convened and duly met on the 2nd day of December, 2017 in Port Harcourt to discuss, debate and deliberate on topical issues of national and industry concerns in the Oil and Gas Industry in particular and the nation at large.

Several issues were raised, thoroughly discussed, debated and deliberated upon by the house.

After very detailed and exhaustive deliberation on all the issues raised during the meeting, the National Executive Council meeting resolves and adopted the following resolutions.

❖ INDUSTRY/ INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ISSUES

1. REDUNDANCIES AND CLOSURES

The increasing loss of jobs and high level of union membership depletion in the industry was one of the major issues discussed and deliberated upon at the meeting, with the NEC-in-session attributing the worrisome situation to unprecedented spate of redundancies and closures of oil firms in the country.

The house finds the situation baffling and confounding bearing in mind the increases in the prices of crude oil and relative peace in the oil producing communities which ought to translate to increasing oil production activities in the industry.

It was noted, that the causes of these company closures and redundancies with its attendant job losses are much more that poor global oil market as

We therefore call on the federal government to quickly set up intervention machinery to address the ugly and undesirable trend with a view of saving jobs and reduce poverty in the land.

2. THE MENACE OF CONTRACT STAFFING/CASUALISATION

The Council also deliberated extensively on the increasing and continuing usage of skilled and competent Nigerians as modern day slaves in their country under the unscrupulous guise of contract staffing.

The meeting noted with serious concern, that the adoption of contract staffing as a method of employment engagement with its attendant abuses without any apparent institutional guidelines and control has generally entrenched workers' rights abuses and inhumane treatment of Nigerian workers by both Multinational oil corporations and indigenous oil companies.

The NEC-in- Session calls on the National Assembly, the Executive arm of Government and other relevant bodies to urgently intervene and rescue oil and gas workers from the exploitative and abuses hands of the employers in the industry.

3. THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY BILL (PIB)

The Council-in-session critically reviewed status of Petroleum Industry Bill before the national assembly and expressed its pleasure on the seriousness the current house of Senate is attaching to passage of the different components of the bill and further applauded the house for the passage of the Petroleum Industry Governance Bill and plan to pass the entire PIB by 2018.

The meeting-in- session, further called on the House of Representatives to expedite actions on the bill as well so as to avoid unnecessary delay in the harmonization of the bill by the two houses of national assembly and subsequently pass it into law early next year.

The NEC –in- Session reiterates the firm belief in the fact the bill when passed into law will engender the much desired transparency and accountability in the Nigeria Oil and Gas Industry for the guaranteed confidence in the sector by both foreign and indigenous investors.

4. TURN AROUND MAINTENANCE (TAM) AND THE REFINERIES

The Council-in-session examined the status of the Country’s Refineries with regards to their functionality and efficiency vis a vis the ongoing Turn-Around-Maintenance for Warri and Kaduna refineries. The meeting-in-session commended government stance to activate the refineries but warned that it should not lead to job losses.

The house-in-session further commended the efforts of the management of N.N.P.C to rehabilitate and recommissioned all the N.N.P.C/P.P.M.C strategic depots across the country. The initiative is seen as both employment generating and income yielding ventures that is well laced with patriotic and nationalistic zeal.

The NEC-in- Session further reiterated its opposition against any attempt to put the refineries or the strategic depots for sale as they are national assets that should be rehabilitated and preserved to reduce the massive importation of petroleum products and boost economic activities the local communities they are located and the nation in general.

5. MODULAR REFINERIES

On the issue of the modular refineries, the NEC-in-session noted the economic impacts of the initiative but observed that the plan of the government to establish modular refineries is misdirected and should be jettisoned.

The NEC-in-session advised that the role of government is to provide legal and institutional framework for the operations of modular refineries to enable the operators of illegal refineries operate within the acceptable legal, financial and environmental guidelines.

The meeting –in-session therefore called on the Federal Government to create platform of engagement with the operators of so called illegal refineries for the purposes of training, guiding and supporting them for meaningful and responsible adoption of modular refineries in the Niger-Delta which will go a long way in curbing the scourge of environmental degradation, pollution and criminal activities.

6. UNRESOLVED LABOUR ISSUES

The NEC-in-session examined long list of unresolved labour issues involving Seawolf Drilling Company, Chevron and their labour Contractors, Tecon Oil Services, Universal Energy Limited, Agip, Exxon Mobil, Shell, Specialty Drilling and Fugro Nigeria, Nigeria Agip Oil Company, Forte oil, Oando, MRS, Conoil, NIPCO and other private depots.

These issues range from non-payment of terminal benefits, short payment of terminal benefits, implementation/ refusal to renew CBA, arbitrary declaration of redundancies, refusal to unionization, victimization of workers due to union activities etc.

The Council –in-session called on the Federal Government and all relevant agencies to urgently intervene in order to avoid the brewing industrial relations crisis in the oil and gas industry.

7. ROADS

The NEC-in-session carefully examined the state of Nigerian roads and commended the efforts of the federal government in rehabilitating and repairing some of the failed sections of the federal highways.

The house noted that the road infrastructure in Nigeria had suffered several years of neglect which makes the current efforts difficult to be immediately appreciated.

The meeting-in-session therefore called on the Federal Government to ensure strict adherence to the advertised budgetary plans and allocations for the repairs and rehabilitations of the highways.

❖ NATIONAL ISSUES

8. INSECURITY

The Council –in - Session was deeply worried with the reported upsurge in the cases of suicide bombings, kidnappings, ritual killings, communal clashes, herdsmen menace and armed robbery across the country.

The meeting-in-session noted that the state of insecurity is a disincentive to investors, national unity and economic development and should therefore be immediately addressed through adequate use of modern intelligence gathering and technological security infrastructure.

The NEC-in-Session further expressed serious concerns over the obvious unhealthy rivalry among the various arms of security agencies in the country as evident in series of missteps on issues of national security and fight against corruption.

The Council-in-session strongly called on President Muhammadu Buhari to immediately overhaul the entire national security apparatus for efficiency and cohesiveness to avoid a state anarchy.

9. POWER

The Council-in-session examined the state of power supply in the country and expressed deep worries over the continued unstable supply of electricity to most living and industrial areas in the country.

The meeting –in-session stressed the importance of stable power supply to the industrialization of the nation and development/ sustenance of small and medium scale businesses.

10. POVERTY/ UNEMPLOYMENT

The current level of poverty, hunger and high rate of unemployment/ disguised employment in the country was of serious concern to the NEC-in-Council. It was extensively deliberated upon and all the levels of government in Nigeria were called upon to urgently address the ugly and

unwholesome situation by opening up the economy, establish cottage industries, help small/medium scale businesses, embark on massive agricultural projects, and ease the processes of business set up through access to loans at reasonable rates and tax holidays.

11. CORRUPTION

The NEC-in- Council noted with deep worries the emerging stories of apparent disjointed, uncoordinated and blurred war against corruption by the current administration. The police pension scam is a clear case of corruption within the war against corruption, it stinks to high heavens.

While the Council –in-session commended some of the initiatives of the Government in the fight against corruption, such as the whistle blow policy, we advised President Muhammadu Buhari to urgently overhaul his anti corruption machinery so as to uproot the entrenched syndicate of corrupt politicians and Civil Servants militating against his avowed campaign against corruption.

12. RESTRUCTURING/TRUE FEDERALISM

The Council-in –session took a careful and patriotic look at continuing calls for restructuring and federalism from different sections and strata of the society with the conclusion that these calls are genuine and legitimate and wants them to be respected.

13. ANTI LABOUR MOVEMENT BEHAVIOR OF AYUBA WABBA

The Meeting-in-Session observed with consternation the increasing ways and manners Comrade Ayuba Wabba has turned himself into agent of destabilizing industrial unions that seek to be free from the shackles of failed congress and truly represent the interests of its members.

These unscrupulous and anti- labour movement activities of Comrade Ayuba Wabba are evident in several petitions written to security agencies and Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment against Union leaders and

unions that refused to do his biddings and even to the extent of making attempts to cause disaffections within these unions as well.

The Council-in-session therefore called on the Nigeria Labour Congress to call Comrade Wabba Ayuba to order in the interest of the working people of Nigeria that are yearning for adequate and proper representation.

14. ULC REGISTRATION

The NEC-in-session carefully examined the efforts the leadership of United Labour Congress have put into meeting the requirements needed for the registration of the United Labour Congress as a labour centre in Nigeria. And, expressed full satisfaction for the progress made so far but noted with deep worries the attitude of some unscrupulous labour leaders and their accomplices in the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment trying to truncate the noble objective of creating adequate representation for Nigerian workers.

The House-in-session therefore, called on the Federal Ministry of Labour and Employment to register without further delay the United Labour Congress (ULC) as a labour centre in Nigeria, representing good numbers of workers in strategic sector of the economy, having met the requirements

The meeting-in-session further warned those individuals and desperate bodies working against the registration, to desist from this short sighted act, as there is freedom of association well entrenched in section 40 of the Nigerian Constitution and eloquently espoused by the ILO convention.

18. VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

The NEC-in-session carefully reviewed the performance and the leadership style of the current management team of the union considering the fact that its tenure is about to expire and drawing from the unprecedented achievements recorded within the time under review in terms of improved conditions of work for staff and members coupled with various capital

projects executed, the NEC-in-session unanimously passed a Vote of Confidence on the National President, Comrade (Dr) Igwe Achese for his purposeful leadership which has taken the Union to an enviable height.

COMRADE IGWE ACHESE
PRESIDENT

COMRADE JOSEPH OGBEBOR
SECRETARY