



NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS

MOTTO: LABOUR CREATES WEALTH

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COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (NEC) MEETING OF THE NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS (NLC) HELD IN PORT HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE ON FRIDAY, 8TH NOVEMBER 2024

The National Executive Council (NEC) of the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) convened in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, on Friday, 8th November 2024, to address the urgent issues facing Nigerian workers and the Nigerian nation. Chaired by the President of the NLC and attended by NEC members from all over the country, this meeting served as a vital platform for voicing the concerns of Nigerian workers and affirming our commitment to confronting the myriad challenges we face daily.

After extensive deliberations, the NEC issues the following resolutions:

1. On the State of the Nation and Worsening Economic Hardship

The NEC observes, with profound concern, the accelerating economic hardship inflicted upon Nigerian citizens. Inflation continues to rise unchecked, with the costs of basic necessities spiralling beyond the reach of the average worker. Millions of Nigerians are being driven into destitution, forced to choose daily between feeding their families and seeking healthcare. Access to energy has become a mirage while workers become increasingly poorer even as they work longer hours to meet their other basic needs. As a result, nutritional diseases like Kwashiorkor and Marasmus have resurfaced in Nigeria.

The NLC demands immediate, concrete interventions from the Federal Government, not token measures, to relieve this suffering. We call for the implementation of comprehensive social protection policies that shield Nigerians from poverty, provide affordable healthcare, and ensure a wage that reflects the true cost of living. To this end, we call for a wage review across the nation including a review of all the policies that have rather emasculated Nigerian people.

2. The Military Invasion of Oritsetimeyin Oil Rig:

NLC demands an immediate withdrawal of all forces of invasion now occupying the Oil rig, a cessation of further militarization of the nation's workplaces and restoration of the workers forcefully ejected from the site including a quick compliance with the agreement faithfully negotiated and earlier signed by the parties.

3. Petrol Pricing and the urgent Need for Activating Public Refineries

The NEC-in-session noted with increasing dismay the shenanigans around the appropriate pricing of petrol (PMS) in Nigeria. It observed that there may be a gang-up against Nigerians by fat cats in the industry as the current price of the product is significantly higher than the real market price. Padding of costs and abnormal margins seems to be the order of the day considering the revelations from the ongoing controversy between Marketers and Dangote group. It is entirely possible that Nigerian workers and masses are being ripped off by those who control the levers of Economic power in Nigeria which explains why the domestic public refineries may not immediately be allowed to come on stream.

NLC demands appropriate pricing of petrol and calls for the Public domestic refineries in PH, Warri and Kaduna to quickly come back on stream to break-up the monopolistic stranglehold the big players have on the industry.

4. On the Political Situation in Rivers State and Unjust Revenue Withholding

The NEC condemns the disturbing political situation in Rivers State, where a recent Court order seeks to block the disbursement of federally allocated revenue to the state. This punitive move, under the guise of legal recourse, may effectively cripple the state's capacity to meet its obligations to workers and the wider population. Such a development is nothing short of an attack on the rights and welfare of the people of Rivers State and a dangerous precedent that could destabilize governance in any other state.

The NLC stands in solidarity with the workers and people of Rivers State. We demand an immediate resolution that allows the state to continue to have unfettered access to its rightful revenue allocations. Nigerian workers will not stand waiting while their livelihoods are threatened by political manoeuvrings and vindictive actions. We are not interested in the politics of who is right or wrong but only in protecting the interests of workers and the people. We must learn to separate "politicking" from existential issues as politics that hurts workers and the people cannot be the best for our nation. The Congress warns that the failure of the various institutions and actors to rein in themselves may lead to our escalating our response.

5. On the Implementation of the National Minimum Wage

The NEC notes with deep frustration the persistent delay and outright refusal by some state governments to implement the 2024 National Minimum Wage Act. This betrayal by certain governors and government officials across the country flies in the face of both legality and morality, as workers continue to be denied their rightful wages amidst rising economic hardship. It is a blatant disregard for the law and the lives of millions of Nigerian workers, who are being exploited by the very leaders sworn to protect them.



The NEC therefore resolves to set up a National Minimum Wage Implementation Committee that will among others commence a nationwide assessment, mobilization and sensitization campaign, educating workers and citizens on the need to resist this assault on their dignity and rights. Furthermore, the NLC shall initiate a series of industrial actions in all non-compliant states and shall not relent until the minimum wage is fully implemented across Nigeria.

To this end, all state Councils where the National Minimum Wage has not been fully implemented by the last day of November, 2024 have been directed to proceed on strike beginning from the 1st day of December, 2024. Nigerian workers demand justice, and justice they shall have.

6. On the Growing Threats to Democracy and Workers' Rights:

The NEC expresses grave alarm at the increasing erosion of democratic norms and blatant disregard for the rights of Nigerian people to freely organize, associate, and express dissent. Arrests, detention and trials on questionable grounds have become the order of the day.

We applaud the President of the federation for his recent interventions in this regard. However, NEC in session further calls on the President to release all remaining protesters in various jails across the nation as we had severally demanded earlier and creating adequate safeguards to avert future occurrence.

7. CNG BUSES:

NEC -in- session expressed its appreciation to the federal Government for providing CNG buses to Congress but noted that they are grossly inadequate to address the huge gap in transportation focused at reducing costs for workers who daily commute to work. It also noted the apparent CNG infrastructure deficits around the country which may scuttle the entire CNG objectives.

Consequently, NEC demanded the provision of more CNG buses to Congress and establish the needed infrastructure for fuelling and maintenance to provide cheaper transportation to Nigerian workers across the nation.

Conclusion

The Nigeria Labour Congress remains unwavering in its commitment to the well-being and dignity of Nigerian workers. The NEC reiterates its readiness to confront these injustices with every tool at our disposal. Our resolve is unshakeable, and our demand is clear: a Nigeria where workers are respected, their rights upheld, and their futures secure.



Comrade Joe Ajaero
President

