

## **ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF POLYTECHNICS (ASUP)**

16<sup>th</sup> April, 2021

### **UPDATE ON THE CURRENT ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN ASUP AND THE GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA**

Nigerians may recall that our Union commenced an industrial action effective 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to draw the attention of the government to the deplorable state of our public Polytechnics and Monotechnics. This is with a view to a reversal of the fortunes of the institutions and placing them on a strong pedestal towards meeting their obligations to the Nigerian people.

The industrial action, currently in its 10<sup>th</sup> day has witnessed strong compliance levels by Chapters of our Union across the nation and has led to some knee jerk reactions from the government both at the Federal and State levels.

The Union has been involved in 2 out of 3 scheduled meetings with the Federal Government as represented by top officials of the Federal Ministry of Education as well as Labour and Employment on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of April, 2021. The third meeting scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> of April was postponed to a later date due to the unavailability of the convener (The Honorable Minister of Labour and Employment). The agreed date shall be communicated to the parties after confirmation with the relevant agencies expected at the meeting.

The meetings as held on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2021 has resulted to some significant outcomes even as we continue to press for appropriate documentations (for process led actions), and practical steps for those demands requiring immediate action.

Within this industrial action, Governing Councils have been set up for all Federal Polytechnics and due to be inaugurated on the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, 2021. This is expected to complete the governance structures in all Federal Polytechnics in the country and therefore ensure the conclusion of stalled staff appraisal processes and appointment of principal officers in affected institutions amongst others. It shall also serve to resuscitate

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the abandoned renegotiation of the Union's 2010 agreement with the government. Visitation panels have also been inaugurated for the Federal Polytechnics. Despite the strong reservations of our Union to the composition of these panels among other issues, it is our hope that the outcomes of the panels shall mark a departure from the previous practices of non-release of reports. We have equally witnessed the recent appointment of a substantive Executive Secretary of the regulatory body for the sector.

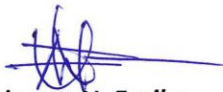
Reports from some state governments, notably Kano, Katsina and Osun indicate ongoing and productive engagements as it affects issues of unpaid salaries, lack of governing councils and non-implementation of new minimum wage among others peculiar to the affected states.

Our Union is however disappointed and indeed is at variance with the recent appointment of unqualified persons as rectors in 5 out of the 6 new Federal Polytechnics in the country. We are further taken aback by the hollow reaction of the government in the form of a defense to this illegality.

We shall continue to view these appointments as illegal as the beneficiaries fell short of the prequalifying criteria for such appointment as stipulated by law and therefore not appointable for the office of the Rector of any (Federal) Polytechnic in the country. We are determined to pursue this position to a logical conclusion for the benefit of the sector, the nation and in favor of the rule of law.

While holding our position in the trenches of this ongoing engagement (until a time the organs of our Union deem fit), we shall sustain the current engagements with the government particularly in furthering and establishing the gains of the engagements of the 6<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of April 2021. Details of these shall also be made known to the public at the appropriate time.

Aluta Continua!



**Anderson U. Ezeibe**  
**(President)**