



## ACADEMIC STAFF UNION OF POLYTECHNICS (ASUP)

15<sup>th</sup> September, 2021

### UPDATE ON THE UNION'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT

Dear Comrades,

Following the expiration of the 3-month period of suspension of the Union's industrial action of April 6<sup>th</sup> to June 10<sup>th</sup> 2021, I am directed to update members on the current status with respect to the issues in dispute.

The Union's leadership had earlier scheduled a Think-Tank Committee meeting as well as a meeting of the Council of National Officers on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2021 respectively to deliberate on same issues. Both meetings were however suspended following the death of our former President (and a member of the Union's Think-Tank Committee), Mallam Mohammed Ali Kabir on his way to the meeting. May his soul rest in peace.

Within the period, the Union has met with the government 2 times (15<sup>th</sup> of June 2021; and 26<sup>th</sup> of August 2021). Similarly, 2 meetings have been held specific to the contentious issue of CONTISS 15 migration arrears (28<sup>th</sup> of July and 26<sup>th</sup> of August, 2021) while the Union has held meeting with the Committee of Chairmen of Governing Councils of Polytechnics on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 2021. The progress reports on the issues are captured hereunder.

1. **REVITALIZATION FUND:** Within the period, approval was secured for the release of revitalization fund of N15Bn for infrastructure revitalization of public Polytechnics and Colleges of Technology. The Implementation Committee which will have responsibility for allocation of the funds, monitoring and implementation is however yet to be set up.

2. **RELEASE OF ARREARS OF MINIMUM WAGE ARREARS:** The Union has received memos from the Budget office of the Federation on the issue. The first batch of letters which is specific to the Union's agitation on the subject came vide DG/BDT/GEN.CORR/2016/IV/2184 of 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2021 addressed to the Federal Ministry of Education; and FME/TE/SS.IM/C.48/1/52 of 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2021 from the Federal Ministry of Education to Rectors of Federal Polytechnics. The second letter requests the Rectors to fill and submit to the Budget Office a certain template for Minimum wage arrears and Promotion arrears conveyed through the letter from the Budget Office for our members on or before 15<sup>th</sup> of September, 2021. Another set of memos, specific to minimum wage arrears but covering all tertiary institutions have also been released to different regulatory agencies including the NBTE vide DG/BDT/GEN.CORR/2016/IV/2224 of 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2021 from the Budget Office requesting for names of beneficiaries. NBTE has equally requested same information from Rectors. Despite the duplicity in these actions, affected institutions have been making the submissions as requested and we are hopeful that we are getting closer to the payments.
3. **ALLEGED TAX LIABILITIES ON SOME POLYTECHNICS:** We are led to believe that this issue has been put to rest as no reports of further demands have been received from the Polytechnics. This has effectively saved members a purported liability of over N20Bn which was set to be deducted from members in 19 Polytechnics.
4. **ARREARS OF CONTISS 15 MIGRATION FOR THE LOWER CADRE:** The committee set up to review the issue as contained in the MOA has been meeting. The contentious report of 2014 is the main subject of dispute as it excluded a lot of members. However preliminary resolutions on the issue is to the effect that the numbers contained in the field report should form the basis for payment and not the numbers contained in the contentious committee report.
5. **RENEGOTIATION OF ASUP/FGN 2010 AGREEMENT:** The Government is in the process of reconstituting this Committee as the inaugurated Governing Councils settle in for their duties.

6. **INAUGURATION OF GOVERNING COUNCILS AND VISITATION PANELS:** Governing Councils inaugurated during the industrial action have settled in to work with promotion exercises concluded in many Polytechnics and processes for appointment of principal officers set in motion in affected Polytechnics. Visitation panels have concluded their assignments and submitted their reports.
7. **APPOINTMENT OF UNQUALIFIED PERSONS AS RECTORS IN POLYTECHNICS:** The Union has instituted legal action against the Federal Government over the appointment of unqualified persons as rectors in 5 out of the 6 new Federal Polytechnics. In same vein, Union has intervened in the situation in some Polytechnics, where the provisions of the Act has not been respected in appointment processes.
8. **NON-PAYMENT OF SALARIES AND ABUSE OF GOVERNANCE IN STATE INSTITUTIONS:** NBTE has set out to review its laws to expand its regulatory powers so as to exercise requisite control over such state institutions. Union still insists that the current regulatory framework needs to be reviewed through policy positions in the interim, rather than wait for a tedious legislative action.
9. **BILL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR POLYTECHNICS:** The bill is still before the House of Representatives.
10. **VICTIMIZED UNION OFFICERS:** The Union had intervened in the Federal Polytechnic Mubi situation and was hopeful of a resolution till the untimely demise of the beneficiary, Mallam Mohammed Ali Kabir. The other cases are still in court. The situation in Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa is also being resolved as resolutions have been reached with the Governing Council and Management on the path to restoration of Union activities in the Polytechnic.
11. **SUSPENDED FME/ASUP RAPID RESPONSE COMMITTEE:** This committee has since resumed sittings according to the prescriptions of the MOA.
12. **STATUS OF MEMBERS IN MONOTECHNICS:** Not much has been achieved in this regard.

**APPEALS:** As the 3-month period of suspension was approaching its end, appeals were received from the Federal Ministry of Education for more time to complete initiated processes. Union has also received appeals from Committee of Chairmen of Governing Councils for restraint as they intervene in the outstanding issues.

**CONCLUSION:** While the organs of the Union has failed to meet as scheduled due to reasons already expressed, meetings to review the situation and take further appropriate decisions for the good of the Union and its members shall be convened as soon as possible. The Union's leadership is appreciative of the support and understanding of members nationwide so far in the engagement.

Comradely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized initials 'SK' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

***Shammah S. Kpanja***  
***(Secretary General)***