



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

### **COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE 104<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (NEC) MEETING HELD IN ABUJA, ON THURSDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 2022**

#### **PREAMBLE:**

The National Executive Council (NEC) of the Academic Staff Union of Polytechnics (ASUP) held its 104<sup>th</sup> National Executive Council (NEC) meeting at Abuja on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 with Chapter Chairmen of the Union from across the States of the Federation and the Council of National Officers (CNO) of the Union in attendance.

The meeting deliberated and had resolutions on the following issues:

- 1) State of affairs in member institutions.
- 2) Poor handling of trade disputes in the education sector by the FGN.
- 3) State of the Nation.

#### **1. State of Affairs in Member Institutions**

NEC decried the sustained poor funding of member institutions which has derailed the actualization of the mandates of these institutions. NEC decried the inadequacies in the operation of the Treasury Single Account (TSA), introduced by the Federal Government and some state governments as such has been shown to be opaque and a poor fit for tertiary institutions. NEC equally condemned the poor funding profiles of several state owned institutions in the country. NEC noted that the poor funding outlook of these institutions has denied the institutions access to enough funds for the purposes accreditation and re-accreditation of programs, infrastructural development, mounting of new courses, sourcing and engagement of competent personnel, and the day to day running of the institutions.

NEC frowned at the wastages of scarce resources by Government and the tacit endorsement of impunity in the sector as evidenced by the non-implementation of the reports of the Visitation Panels set up for the Federal Polytechnics in 2012; and the non release of the white paper for 2021 visitation.

NEC noted with discomfort the harassment of its members at the Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti by the EFCC Zonal office in Ilorin under the guise of investigating allegations of fraud in the institution. While recognizing the statutory duties of the anti graft agency, we are convinced that such duties should be discharged in accordance with the rule of law without undermining the dignity and self worth of our members, and indeed other citizens.

NEC observed with dismay, the current suspension of the activities of the Governing Council of Federal Polytechnic, Oko by the Federal Ministry of Education. The union notes that such is in dissonance with the provisions of the Federal Polytechnic's Act and as such has created an avoidable vacuum in the governance of the institution. This is currently having adverse consequences on staff welfare issues and general wellbeing of the institution.

The Union also condemned the non representation of the Union members at Federal Colleges of Agriculture in the process of amending the Scheme and Condition of Service of the Institutions by Agricultural Research Council of Nigeria (ARCN) was also discussed and condemned

NEC expressed dissatisfaction with the snail-speed approach of government in addressing the following:

- i. The lack of transparency, as well as stakeholders exclusion in the processes leading to the release and allocation of the approved 15billion Naira revitalization fund for public Polytechnics in the country.
- ii. The conclusion of the ASUP/FGN re-negotiation of 2010 agreement.
- iii. Revision and release of an acceptable Scheme of Service for Polytechnics.
- iv. Withdrawal of the contradictory template for the appointment of principal officers and the need to replace same, as observed by the Union.
- v. Appointment of a substantive Rector for Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State.

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. The EFCC to respect the rights and dignity of ASUP members at the Federal Polytechnic Ado-Ekiti in their investigations and encouraged the chapter to deploy legal instruments and advocacy campaigns to deter the continued harassment of members by the anti graft agency.

- b. The Visitor to the Federal Polytechnic Oko, His Excellency President Muhammadu Buhari to expeditiously and decisively resolve any issues with the operations of the governing council of the Institution and/or its members within the ambit of the Federal Polytechnics Act with a view to restoring the activities of the Council.
- c. ARC/N to integrate ASUP members at Federal Colleges of Agriculture who have been sidelined in the review process of the Scheme and Condition of Service for the Institutions.
- d. The Federal Government and concerned States to review the TSA policy in line with the peculiarities and dynamics of the tertiary education sub-sector, in order to prevent industrial disharmony that will be triggered by the inability of the Councils and Managements of Institutions to meet up with acceptable operational standards in the sector. Proprietors of Polytechnics, particularly state governments are to improve on and ensure adequate funding profiles for their institutions.
- e. The Federal Government to ensure the release of the white paper for the 2021 visitation panels to pave the way for implementation of the reports.
- f. The Federal Government to ensure the transparent allocation, deployment and monitoring of the funds meant for the revitalization of infrastructure in the sector.
- g. The Federal Government to ensure the conclusion of 2010 re-negotiation processes.
- h. The government to ensure the conclusion of the review of the Scheme of Service and the replacement of the rejected template for the appointment of principal officers in the sector. Consequently, the NEC reiterated its support for the legal action instituted by the Union, challenging the ongoing processes of appointment of a substantive Rector in Federal Polytechnic Ede and shall escalate the process to other institutions if the template is not reviewed to align with the legal and professional peculiarities of the sector.
- i. The Visitor to ensure the appointment of a substantive Rector at the Federal Polytechnic Offa without any further delay. The chapter was encouraged to follow through the provisions in the Union's constitution in deploying the declaration of a Trade dispute on the issue.

## **2. Poor Handling of trade disputes in the education sector by the Government**

NEC noted with great disappointment the persistent failure of FGN to honor resolutions and agreements signed with Unions in the tertiary education sector which has resulted in frequent declarations of industrial actions in the sector.

NEC noted that despite the patriotic leanings of the unions, government has been compounding the conflicts by their actions and inactions. NEC made copious reference to the tardy handling of the industrial crises in the University system by the government where the situation has degenerated to the deployment of starvation, judicial intimidation and shameless plots of balkanization of unions, as instruments of conflict resolution particularly in its dealings with the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU).

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. Nigerians should rally round the staff unions in the tertiary sector and ensure that citizens are not blocked from having access to quality education at the tertiary level. Nigerians should deploy every lawful instrument to resist any attempt by government to make public tertiary institutions inaccessible to the masses.
- b. Federal Ministry of Labor to desist from the plot to balkanize ASUU and ensure that the registration and recognition of any new union in the University system in particular and the tertiary education landscape in general is in sync with the law.
- c. The government to release salaries owed to members of ASUU, SSANU, NAAT, and NASU in the Nigeria University system to facilitate restoration of sustainable industrial harmony; and to deploy the globally accepted instrument of collective bargaining in resolving trade dispute in the sector.
- d. ASUP therefore stands in unfettered solidarity with ASUU in its current engagement with the government.

### **3. State of the Nation**

NEC received with dismay and consequently condemned the quantum of theft of crude oil theft and other mineral resources of the nation as revealed in recent times.

NEC is worried over the nature and extent of the damages on the economic base of the country, and observed that the recent discovery of crude oil theft in the country by an informal security unit amplifies the rot in the nation`s formal security organizations. This is in addition to the sustained high level of insecurity in the nation.

NEC noted that despite several early warnings, the authorities concerned have repeatedly failed to act appropriately to avert the devastating effect of flooding in most parts of the country. This has left many lives lost, farms and property destroyed and a large number of people, displaced. The situation has created untold consequences on the already pauperized citizens and the overall security of the country and is worsened by the nation`s poor record in disaster management.

NEC noted also that major roads connecting the various parts of the nation have been blocked thereby aggravating shortages of food and other essential items in all parts of the country, which has led to the sudden hike in prices of food items and scarcity of other items like petroleum products in some parts of the nation.

NEC equally notes the signing of the peace accord by political parties and their candidates for the 2023 general elections and hopes that such will facilitate a smooth electoral process.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

- a. Federal government to ensure a sincere, open and thorough investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators of the theft of crude oil and other mineral resources across the country.
- b. Nigerians to always imbibe environmentally friendly practices by avoiding harmful practices of building and dumping refuse on water ways to reduce the dangers of flooding.
- c. Federal Government to properly equip and empower its relevant agencies to rescue the nation`s transportation infrastructure from the annual blockages by flood.
- d. Governments to seek lasting solutions to the problem, including constructing dams in appropriate locations to ameliorate the flooding and enhance food security across the nation.
- e. Government to review the security architecture of the nation, through proper collaboration among all security agencies in order to tame the growing insecurity in the country.
- f. Political parties and their candidates to embark on issue based campaigns and respect the peace accord signed in the run down to the 2023 general elections.



**Abdullahi Yalwa,  
Publicity Secretary.**