

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE 26TH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON
WORKS HELD ON THURSDAY 10TH DECEMBER, 2020 AT THE HOTEL
PRESIDENTIAL, PORT – HARCOURT, RIVERS STATE**

The 26th Meeting of the National Council on Works with the theme **“Road Infrastructure Development, Job Creation and National Economic Growth”** held on Thursday 10th December, 2020 at the Atlantic Hall, Hotel Presidential, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The Council Meeting was preceded by a 3-Day Meeting of Directors and Permanent Secretaries from Monday 7th – Wednesday 9th December, 2020.

2. The Meeting was declared open by the Governor of Rivers State, His Excellency, Barr. Nyesom Ezenwo Wike. The Honourable Minister of Works and Housing, Babatunde Raji Fashola SAN, presided over the meeting which was also attended by Honourable Minister (State), Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, Engr. Abubakar D. Aliyu, FNSE, the Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Works and Housing, Ernest A. Umakhihe FCA, fnim, Honourable Commissioners in charge of Works and Infrastructure from the 36 States of Federation and Federal Capital Territory, as well as senior officials of relevant Federal and State, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) under the purview of Ministries of Works, representatives of the Works and Survey Corps in the Armed Forces, Police and Paramilitary, the Academia, International Organizations, Regulatory Bodies and other Stakeholders.

3. The Chairmen of Senate and House Committees on Works, as well as the Director-General of Budget of the Federation (BoF), delivered Goodwill messages. Also present at the Meeting were the Corps Marshall, Federal Roads Safety Corps, Representative of the Surveyor-General of the Federation, Managing Director/CEO Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) amongst others.

COUNCIL DELIBERATIONS

In the course of the Meeting, a total of forty-five (46) Memoranda were received, twenty (20) were merged to form eight (8). Eight (8) Memoranda were stepped down and one (1) withdrawn, Three (3) moved to status implementation report and twenty-three (23) were considered. The Memoranda deliberated upon were grouped into six thematic groups:

i. Policy Formulation, Institutional Strengthening and Professionalism	- 20
ii. Financing of Road Development	- 5
iii. Tolling, Weigh Bridges and Economic Growth	- 6
iv. Local Content in Road Development	- 3
v. New Technologies in Road Construction and maintenance	- 5
vi. Jobs Creation in Road Development	- 4
Rejected Memos	- 3
Total	- 46

Council considered the issues raised in the Memoranda presented at the Meeting and resolved to:

1. **note** the importance of introducing and implementing the Outcome Based Education in engineering by COREN to the technical and all engineering institutions in Nigeria;
2. **note** that some States Government through the State Ministries of Works have acquired road construction plants and equipment to enhance direct labour for mass construction of roads and drainages across the States at minimum cost by the State Road Maintenance Agencies;
3. **note** that the Federal Government should engage local labour for the construction and maintenance of federal highways in the Federation;
4. **note** that COREN through the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing has written to National Council on Establishment for the elongation of technical cadre to SGL 17.
5. **note** the need to ensure that all new road construction/rehabilitation jobs are exclusively awarded to local indigenous engineering contactors and construction firms;

6. **note** the need for tolling booths and weighbridges in specified locations be managed by a road management company as a vital tool for enhancing road development in Nigeria and revenue generation for government;
7. **note** the need to adequately fund street lights maintenance because it has job creation potentials and sustenance for maximum benefits;
8. **note** that Road Infrastructure has through engagement of skilled and unskilled labours created both direct/indirect jobs in road construction and maintenance of road projects;
9. **note** that there is increase in infrastructural investment which reflected in human capacity development, income opportunities and alleviation of poverty;
10. **note** that there is improvement in the transportation system and improved state of health of commuters;
11. **note** that the top three critical success factors for smooth practice of PPP as alternative sources of funding infrastructure projects such road network in Nigeria include suitable Financier, Sound Economic Policy and Good Governance;
12. **note** that there is the need for improvement in the current efforts by Federal Government in the repair and rehabilitation of its roads nationwide to enhance security surveillance and quick response from security Agencies;
13. **note** that some State Governments are interested in adhering to all necessary procedures and compliance with set out conditions by the Federal Government in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Federal roads for onward reimbursement;

14. **note** that overloaded vehicles plying Nigerian roads, frequent breakdown of articulated vehicles and buses on our major highways have inflicted great structural damage to our highways thereby shortening the design life span of roads;
15. **note** the importance of good road infrastructure to Agricultural activities in the rural areas;
16. **note** that Kwara State keyed into World Bank project of Rural Access and Agricultural Marketing Project (RAAMP) and reaping the benefits therein;
17. **note** that new jobs can be created directly in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of infrastructural projects;
18. **note** that infrastructural projects need to be designed to provide technical training opportunities for the youth;
19. **promote** roads and drainage construction through direct labour to enhance job creation;
20. **promote** permanent employment of temporary staff with due experience on the job;
21. **promote** the intervention of private sector in the maintenance of street light as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR);
22. **promote** synergy between the FMW&H, FRSC, VIO and other stakeholders towards the reactivation and use of the weigh bridges in the country;
23. **promote** the implementation of ECOWAS Protocol on standards and procedures for control of Dimension, Weight and Axle loads of goods vehicles within ECOWAS member states as agreed in 2012 by ECOWAS Heads of States;

24. **promote** toll collection through Public Private Partnership;
25. **promote** the adoption of ECOWAS protocol on Right of Way (ROW);
26. **promote** the building of vehicle transit Parks facilities along the nation's highways;
27. **promote** the inclusion of training in major construction works with strict adherence to implementation of the training component;
28. **encourage** State Governments on the funding of Area Engineer's Office for maintenance and supervision of Federal roads in the State;
29. **encourage** the construction of Road Camps for the Road Overseers along the Federal highways to create jobs;
30. **encourage** States to promote alternative sources of powering street lights;
31. **encourage** the Federal and State Governments to strengthen the relevant agencies involved in harnessing Private Sector Funding for infrastructure in the country;
32. **encourage** the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing to engage the heavy users of the road such as cement manufacturers, steel billet companies, and asphalt companies so that overloading could be tackled from the source;
33. **encourage** Federal Roads Safety Corps to work with all levels of Government to remove all obstructions within the Federal Highway Right of Way of 45meters on either side of the road;

34. **encourage** all tiers of Government to acquire Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) to complement existing traditional methods for supervision, monitoring and control of the quality construction on Nigerian roads;
35. **encourage** all tiers of Government to use Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) as a new technology, current construction materials and equipment that reduces human error, improves accuracy and speeds up the work process;
36. **encourage** all tiers of Government to liaise with research institutions on the use of plastic waste in bituminous pavement repair, as an effective way to dispose plastic;
37. **enjoin** all states to re-introduce technical cadre (Road Overseer, Road Attendant, Road Foreman etc.) where they do not exist;
38. **enjoin** all stakeholders in the construction industry to collaborate and reclaim borrow pits immediately after usage;
39. **enjoin** the Federal Government to further strengthen and adequately fund the Federal and State Road Maintenance Agencies in order to maintain the available roads in the country;
40. **urge** that the Federal Ministry of Works be part of the Committee established by the Federal Ministry of Education for the implementation of Outcome Based Education in Engineering and other allied professions;
41. **urge** Governments at all levels to implement the provisions of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in respect of reclamation of borrow pits at project sites;
42. **urge** Government at all levels to put in place mechanism for the protection of street lights across the country;

43. **urge** Government at all levels to allocate special funds for roads projects, finance public investments and promote Public Private Partnership (PPP) projects;
44. **urge** Governments at all levels to utilize donations and grants from international donors to fund road development;
45. **urge** Government at all levels to enforce relocation of all markets along the Right of Ways;
46. **urge** State Governments to commission vehicle inspection offices;
47. **urge** the Federal Government to provide data on Right of Way to the Office of the State Surveyor-Generals to enable them advise State Town Planning Authorities appropriately;
48. **urge** Government at all levels to provide a designated land spaces for markets, parks and rest areas at a safe distance along the major highways;
49. **urge** State Governments and their respective traffic Agencies to also remove all obstructions like markets, stalls, illegal parking areas, food vendors sheds and business stands;
50. **urge** Government at all levels to enforce relocation of all markets away from the roads;
51. **urge** the Federal and State Governments to immediately put in place necessary measures that will enable the engagement of contractors on road construction and maintenance using Output Performance Based Contracts;
52. **urge** Government at all levels to engage local and indigenous contractors with emphasis on requisite experience, plants and equipment on road maintenance using Output Performance-Based Contracts;

53. **urge** Government at all levels to ensure road infrastructure development in the rural areas to encourage agricultural activities and post-harvest gains;
54. **urge** all tiers of Government to conduct further short and long-term trials particularly Polymer Modified Bitumen/Styrene-Butadiene Styrene (PMB/SBS) already in use by the Federal Ministry of Works, so that it gains broader acceptability;
55. **urge** that project preparation should henceforth enforce more rigorous environmental impact studies that should protect sustainable biodiversity;
56. **urge** all tiers of Government to consider the use of large scale precast concrete drain and precast interlocking concrete pavement having regards to the cost implications of cast insitu concrete methods;
57. **urge** MDAs responsible for infrastructure projects to take the opportunity to upgrade their training centres;
58. **implore** State Governments to leverage on existing tax credits facilities within their jurisdiction;
59. **ensure** that borrow pits are sited at safe distances away from roads and community settlements;
60. **ensure** compliance with known and applicable standards in street-lighting regulations;
61. **explore** the expansion of the Public-Private partnership initiative in Nigeria's road construction to cover all roads so as to advance economic growth;

62. **explore** project financing through Special Purpose Vehicles (SPV) registration, duty levies, loans from Development and Private banks;
63. **appeal** to the Federal Government to re-consider its decision and allow State Governments to carry out interventions under agreed conditions and be reimbursed later;
64. **advise** the need to implement decisions earlier reached at the previous Council Meetings;
65. **maintain** continuous environmental impact surveillance on completed projects; exercise regulatory control on construction sand mining and such other activities upstream of major hydraulic structures in order to prevent any threat to their structural stability;
66. **prohibit** the approval of building along Right of Way;
67. **request** various road authorities at all levels to enforce the compulsory minimum 45.72 meters Right of Way regulation on all the highways;
68. **make** appropriate budgetary provision of funds to street lighting street lighting maintenance;
69. **support** that bonds from capital market should be used in funding Road Infrastructure Development;
70. **support** the need for improved synergy and cooperation between the Federal Government, States and the FCT in road development and maintenance;
71. **consider** concessioning of Road Infrastructure Assets;

72. **consider** the need to encourage State Governments to continue to intervene in Federal Roads Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Maintenance;
73. **consider** the incorporation of Automated Vehicle identification (AVI), Logic Weigh, Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) into the Weigh Bridges Design and Management;
74. **direct** the strict enforcement to the provisions of Executive Order 005 on local content policy with respect to Road Infrastructure Projects; and
75. **approve** the apprenticeship placement of Students in Technical Colleges and all students in Tertiary Institutions on contracts at all levels of government for effective implementation of OBE and repositioning the educational sector;
76. **approve** training and apprenticeship of all MDAs supervised by the Federal and State Ministries of Works for technical and engineering training;
77. **approve** the urgent infrastructure audit of all the technical training school both in Federal and State level.
78. **approve** that the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing as supervisory body should conduct a “Vocational and other Technical Training needs assessment for road infrastructure development” and come up with policy document for the nation which would be adopted by State Government;
79. **approve** that the Training schools in the country should commence the training and re-training of all cadres such as

Engineers, technicians, craftsmen etc. for infrastructural development;

80. **approve** the upgrade of the physical infrastructure and workshops (with up-to-date machines and equipment) of the training schools in the country;
81. **approve** that construction companies should sponsor indigenous personnel in acquiring relevant skills and updating their competence in modern software and relevant applications;
82. **approve** the local content in Road Development through the engagement of home-grown consultancy service providers; and
83. **approve** the engagement of local contractors with proven track record of performance in Road Infrastructure Development;
84. **approve** the use of Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) alongside the conventional collection method;
85. **approve** the incorporation of relevant technological development such as Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR);
86. **approve** that job creation be incorporated into the design, construction, operation and maintenance of infrastructural projects.