



CENTRE FOR WOMEN STUDIES AND INTERVENTION (CWSI)

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PRESS STATEMENT

PARLIAMENT'S REJECTION OF PRO-EQUALITY BILLS IN NIGERIA: A MAJOR SETBACK FOR NIGERIAN WOMEN

On Tuesday, March 1st, 2022, both chambers of the National Assembly rejected five pro-equality bills while voting on 68 constitution amendment bills. The bills rejected are as follows:

- Bill 35- Special seats for women in parliament at the National Assembly and the States House of Assembly.
- Bill 36- Expansion of the scope of citizenship by registration: Granting citizenship rights to spouses of women from Nigeria.
- Bill 37- Adoption of at least 35% representation of women in political parties administration
- Bill 38- Granting Indigeneship rights to a woman who is married to an indigene of a state different from her state of origin.
- Bill 68- 20% quota for women in the federal and state executive councils or ministerial and commissionership seats.

This act of rejection has reinforced the disregard for the rights for women, discrimination, bias and underrepresentation of women in governance which the Centre for Women Studies and Intervention (CWSI) have over the years worked assiduously in addressing. It is unconscionable to reject the advancement of the Nigerian Women who make up more than 50% of the voting population in gaining equitable representation at the apex level of law making and political participation.

One question comes to mind aptly in the face of this drawback: *What is the NASS's reason for consistently rejecting laws meant to advance the progress of women in Nigeria?*

We as an Organisation express our disappointment in the National Assembly for failing to transform the landscape of the Country for the progress of the Nigerian Women. This rejection constitutes a blatant disregard for the work Honourable Female legislators, Civil Society Organisations and Non-governmental Organisations have carried out tirelessly to see that the representation of women and the rights of women are protected and assured in Nigeria. This major setback has revealed to CWSI, the enormity of work that still needs to be done to create attitudinal change towards issues concerning Nigerian Women starting from the constituents to the legislators now more than ever.

The Centre for Women Studies and Intervention seeks support from the public to join in demanding that the pro-equality bills be reconsidered constructively as they would not only benefit Nigerian women but the nation as well.

Notwithstanding this disappointing development, CWSI remains confident that we shall rise above this setback and attain equality and progress by strategically working with more intensity to reach the percentage who voted against the pro-equality bills.

Signed

Sr. Ngozi Frances Uti, HHCJ

Executive Director, CWSI

11th March, 2022