

Quarterly Policy Review

QUARTER 4, DECEMBER 2023

OrderPaper 



A PEEP INTO NIGERIA'S

# 10th NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

QUARTERLY POLICY REVIEW

**A PEEP INTO NIGERIA'S 10TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

ORDERPAPER NIGERIA

QUARTER 4, DECEMBER 2023

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## Glossary of Terms

ADC	African Democratic Congress
APC	All Progressives Congress
APGA	All Progressive Grand Alliance
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
LP	Labour Party
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NASS	National Assembly
NNPMO	Nigerian Network of Parliamentary Monitoring Organisations
NNPP	New Nigerian People's Party
PCU	Programmes Coordinating Unit
PDP	Peoples Democratic Party
QPR	Quarterly Policy Review
SDP	Social Democratic Party

The Constitution The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended)

## **Acknowledgement**

OrderPaper appreciates the leadership, membership, and bureaucracy of the National Assembly for allowing a convenient environment to undertake this work. A special thanks to the staff of OrderPaper for the tremendous show of teamwork and dedication to accomplish this work. All of the work we do will not get the needed reach and impact without the support of the media- accordingly, our immense gratitude to colleagues in the media for always being available to grant us space to ventilate and amplify.



## About the QPR Series and this Work

OrderPaper, as Nigeria's foremost Parliamentary Monitoring Organisation (PMO) and Convener/Secretariat of the Nigeria Network of PMOs, publishes an expert position on a specific policy issue every quarter. These publications are called Quarterly Policy Reviews (QPRs). They are focused on an extensive examination of identified policy themes in order to draw clear conclusions on how well policy actors have addressed public concerns. As appropriate, the QPRs not only highlight decisions/actions taken to address governance challenges but offer recommendations that advance healthy public debate and alternative solutions.

This QPR on the 10th National Assembly (produced for Quarter 4, 2023) offers a useful snippet of the 10th National Assembly, which was inaugurated on June 13th, 2023. Given our mandate to bridge the gap between citizens and the parliament, we believe this work helps stakeholders and the public understand the undercurrents behind the emergence, composition, and tone of the newly inaugurated assembly.

We believe that understanding the political dynamics, interests, and incentives of members of the National Assembly is essential to promoting accountability, inclusion and transparency by the 10th Assembly. This QPR, therefore, provides a SWOT -Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats - analysis of the assembly. Furthermore, it offers possible strategies to engage with and track the performance of the members of the assembly. By analysing the political and economic factors at play within the legislature, stakeholders are enabled for productive engagements with the 10th National Assembly.

This work was adapted from the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) of the 10th National Assembly produced by OrderPaper for the GIFT (Growth Initiatives for Fiscal Transparency) Project.

## Executive Summary

The National Assembly is a critical institution in Nigeria's polity, serving as the ultimate realm of public policy on all matters in the exclusive and concurrent legislative lists outlined in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended). Given the work, OrderPaper does on legislative accountability, and as Convener of the Nigeria Network of Parliamentary Monitoring Organisations (NNPMOs), it becomes pertinent to document the emergence, current context as well as the anticipated impact of the 10th National Assembly.

The National Assembly of Nigeria consists of two chambers: the Senate and the House of Representatives. The Senate is composed of 109 senators representing each of Nigeria's 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). The House of Representatives consists of 360 members elected based on the population size of each of the federal constituencies. This structure ensures both fair and proportional representation in policy-making at the national level.

The National Assembly plays a significant role in representing the needs of the people, serving as a check and balance to possible executive excesses, and enacting legislation that critically impacts citizens' well-being and welfare. By its structure and evolution, the federal legislature has grappled with certain challenges that tend to impact its functionality. These include a prevailing culture of accountability and transparency deficits, low citizen participation and inclusion in the legislative process, bogus behavioural patterns that tend to alienate citizens, and perception of corruption which tends to erode the credibility and functionality of the National Assembly. Others include capacity gaps, lack of sufficient institutional memory, and inadequate resources to guarantee its independence. These challenges, which predate the 10th National Assembly, have telling impacts on the processing of legislation and the competent discharge of oversight and representation

functions. These challenges, some of which are avoidable and/or surmountable, have, unfortunately, led to the erosion of public trust in the legislature. The consequences of this are many, including service delivery deficits that hinder good governance, stifle citizens' welfare, and slow down economic growth.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the National Assembly has also played a vital role in driving economic growth and overall national development. Through law-making, oversight and other legislative initiatives, the assembly has, over time, carried out interventions addressing the people's security, economic and social needs.

This QPR outlines the structure and character of the 10th National Assembly, highlights the factors that shaped the emergence of its leadership and offers insights on how these would combine together to impact its effectiveness. This work contains the political colouration, largely skewed gender representation, and projects a propensity for subordination of the public interest by elected representatives.

Overall, this QPR provides the requisite foundation to engage with the 10th assembly by citizens, public and private entities.

**Oke Epia**

Founder/Executive Director

OrderPaper Nigeria

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## 1. About the National Assembly of Nigeria

Nigeria's National Assembly is the legislative arm of government provided for under section 4 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended). With Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, the legislative arm has had six consecutive assemblies spanning a period of 24 years. The National Assembly, located in the nation's capital, Abuja, is run as a bicameral legislature. The Senate is sometimes referred to as the Red Chamber or Upper House, and the House of Representatives, the Green Chamber or Lower House. While the Senate consists of 109 seats filled through elections at the Senatorial Districts, the House of Representatives consists of 360 seats also filled by way of elections within the 360 Federal Constituencies spread across the country.

The National Assembly is responsible for legislating for the federation (including the Federal Capital Territory, FCT, Abuja) and performs three core functions: lawmaking, representation, and oversight. All matters in the exclusive and concurrent legislative lists fall within the purview of the National Assembly. It is one of the three arms of the Federal Government, the other two being the Executive and the Judiciary.

## 2. Brief on the Tenth National Assembly

Following the conclusion of the February 25, 2023, National Assembly elections, the 10th National Assembly was inaugurated on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, with both returning and new lawmakers taking their oath of office simultaneously in the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively. The four-year tenure will end on June 12, 2027.

The Assembly, comprising a total of 469 legislators, witnessed a high turnover of fresh men and women even as it boasts of the most diverse political representation in the legislature's history, with eight political parties represented disproportionately in both chambers.

The 10th Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

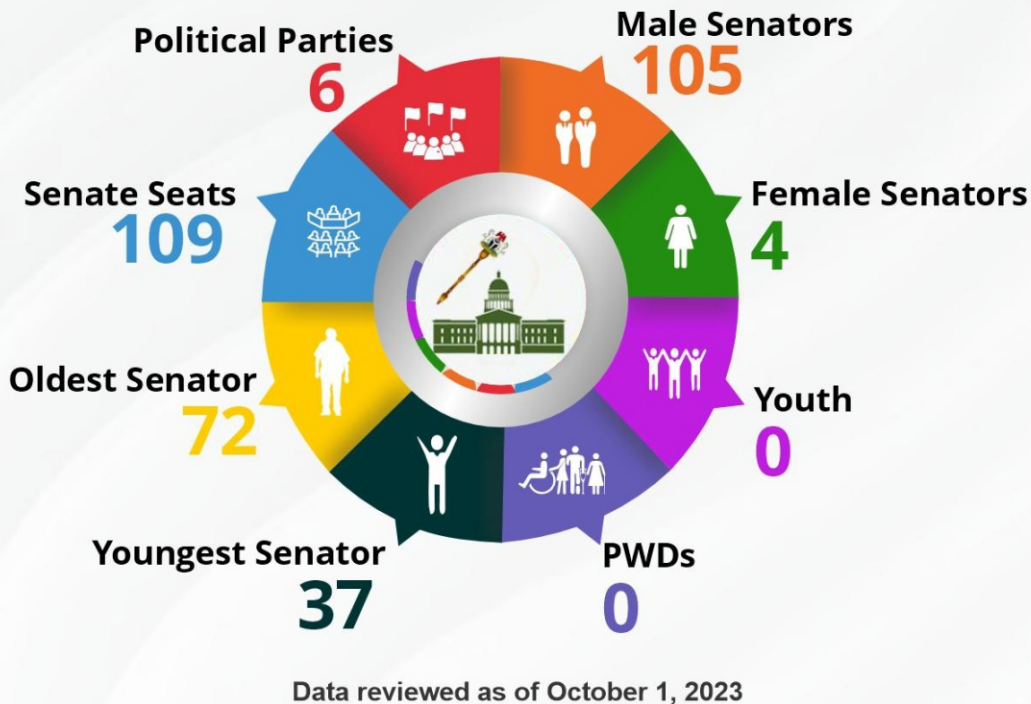
The Senate comprises **109** Senators representing the **36** states of the federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Each state is divided into three senatorial districts, each represented by a Senator, while the FCT has only one Senator.

Political party representation in the 10th Senate is spread across six parties as of the date of this publication. The ruling All Progressives Congress (APC) occupies 59 seats, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) takes **37**, the Labour Party (LP) has **8**, the New Nigeria Peoples' Party (NNPP) and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) has two apiece, and the All Progressives Grand Alliance (APGA) has only **1**. The lone senator of the Young People's Party (YPP) defected to the APC a few months into the life of the assembly.

In terms of turnover of senators, the composition of the 10th Senate for returning and new members stands at **54** per cent to **46** per cent, respectively. In terms of gender, the 10th Senate is highly disproportionate. Out of **109 senators**, **105** are males, leaving only four female senators in the composition.

Figure 1 below shows the configuration of the 10th Senate across several parameters:

## COMPOSITION OF THE NIGERIAN SENATE 10TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



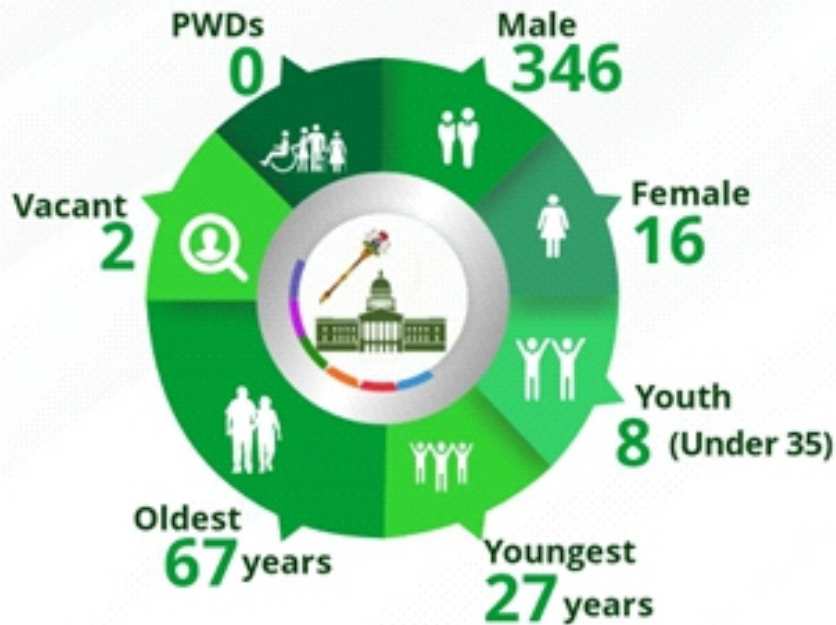
**Figure 1**

### The 10th House of Representatives of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

The House of Representatives consists of 360 members representing the 360 Federal Constituencies in the country. Like the Senate, political party representation is diverse in the House, with eight parties sharing the seats. In distribution, the ruling APC occupies the highest number of seats, with 176. The PDP follows with 119 seats, the LP has 35 seats, the NNPP has 19, APGA has 5, and the SDP and YPP take two seats respectively, just as the African Democratic Congress (ADC) has two.

The composition of the 10th House for returning and new members stands at 70 per cent to 30 per cent, respectively. The gender composition of the 10th House shows that 344 of the 360 members are males, and 16 are female representatives. Figure 2 is a snapshot of the composition of the 10th House across several parameters:

## COMPOSITION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 10TH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY



Data reviewed as of October 1, 2023

**Figure 2**

### 3. 10th National Assembly: Inauguration and Resignations

Since the inauguration of the 10th Assembly on June 13, 2023, there have been some resignations in the Senate and the House of Representatives, respectively. These resignations have been as a result of appointments to the executive arm of the government by the President of Nigeria. However sadly, some deaths have been recorded pre and post-inauguration of the assembly. The effect of these resignations and deaths is that some seats have become vacant (in line with Section 68 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (as amended) early in the life of the assembly. It is now the responsibility of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) to conduct bye-elections to fill these vacant seats. Below are some of the prominent resignations in the 10th assembly thus far:

## **Femi Gbajabiamila**

On June 14, 2023, a day after the inauguration of the 10th House of Representatives, the 9th Assembly Speaker and representative for Surulere 1 Federal Constituency of Lagos State, Femi Gbajabiamila, resigned his membership of the House. Gbajabiamila's resignation resulted from his appointment as Chief of Staff to President Bola Tinubu on 2 June. To take up his new portfolio, he sent in his resignation, announced via a letter read on the floor of the House by Speaker Tajudeen Abbas.

## **Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo**

Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo resigned from the 10th House of Representatives on August 21, 2023, following his appointment as Minister of Interior by President Tinubu. During the February National Assembly elections, he was re-elected to represent Akoko North East/North West Federal Constituency of Ondo State. His resignation was conveyed in a letter addressed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Rt. Hon. Tajudeen Abbas, who consequently declared his seat vacant.

## **Tanko Sununu**

Following his appointment as Minister of State for Education by President Tinubu, Hon. Tanko Sununu resigned his membership of the House of Representatives. His resignation letter was read on the floor of the House by the Speaker, and his seat was declared vacant accordingly. Sununu was the representative of the Yauri/Shanga/Ngaski Federal Constituency of Kebbi State.

## **David Umahi**

David Umahi was elected to represent Ebonyi South in the Senate after serving two consecutive terms as governor of Ebonyi State. Umahi was appointed minister by the President shortly after he took his oath of office alongside other senators and has since resumed duties as Minister of Works in the cabinet of President Tinubu. Two months after being sworn in as a minister, Umahi's seat in the Senate is yet to be declared vacant per Section 69 of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), as he has neglected to resign his membership of the 10th National Assembly.

## **Ibrahim Geidam**

Ibrahim Geidam was elected into the 10th Senate to represent Yobe East. However, his time in the 10th Assembly was brief after he was appointed Minister of Police Affairs by President Tinubu. A former governor, Geidam, who was also a member of the 9th Senate, has yet to resign his membership of the National Assembly.

## **Vacancy via Deaths**

There have been two incidents of reported death in the 10th Assembly. First was the late Hon. Ismaila Yushau Maihanci, lawmaker-elect for Jalingo/Yorro/Zing Federal Constituency in the House of Representatives who passed on before he was sworn in, and Hon. Abdulkadir Jelani Danbuga, who until his death represented the Isa/Sabon Birni Federal Constituency of Sokoto State.



## 4. Leadership of the National Assembly

Both the 10th Assembly Senate and House of Representatives have a leadership structure in place already. Some leadership provisions are provided for in Section 50 (1) of the 1999 Constitution (as amended), while others are provided for in the Senate and House rule books, respectively. While the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Deputy President of the Senate and the Deputy Speaker of the House are referred to as presiding officers, the other category of leaders are referred to as principal officers. These include the Majority Leader, Deputy Majority Leader, Chief Whip, Deputy Whip, Minority Leader, Deputy Minority Leader, Minority Whip and Deputy Minority Whip of both the green (House of Representative) and red (Senate) chambers.

### The leadership of the 10th Senate

On June 13th, 2023, the 10th Senate elected its presiding officers using an open ballot system and a simple majority requirement. This led to the emergence of the following persons as presiding officers as indicated in Figure 3 below:

The infographic is titled "Leadership of the 10th National Assembly" and "Senate - Presiding officers | Elected June 13th, 2023". It features two portraits of senators. The first portrait is of Sen. Godswill Akapbio, wearing a red cap and white shirt, identified as the President of the Senate from the Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District. The second portrait is of Sen. Barau Jibrin, wearing a patterned cap and white shirt, identified as the Deputy President of the Senate from the Kano North Senatorial District. Both portraits include the APC logo below them. The infographic also displays the logos for "Constrack" and "OrderPaper" at the top.

Position	Name	Constituency
President of the Senate	Sen. Godswill Akapbio	Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District
Deputy President of the Senate	Sen. Barau Jibrin	Kano North Senatorial District

Figure 3



## Principal Officers of the 10th Senate

Following consultations with the leadership of the ruling and minority political parties and among senators themselves some emerged as principal officers of the 10th Senate: It is to be noted that some hitherto appointees into principal offices were replaced following judicial decisions which removed them from the Senate. See Figure 4 below for principal officers of the 10th Senate:



Figure 4

## The Leadership of the 10th House of Representatives

Similar to the Senate, the House of Representatives elected and swore in its presiding officers on June 13th, 2023. At the end of the election, which was conducted by open ballot and a simple majority requirement, the following legislators as capture in the figures below emerged as presiding officers:

## Leadership of the 10th National Assembly

House of Representatives - Presiding Officers



Speaker of the House of Representatives  
**Hon. Tajudeen Abbas**  
 Zaria Federal Constituency, Kaduna State



Deputy Speaker of the House Representatives  
**Hon. Benjamin Okezie Kalu**  
 Bende Federal Constituency, Abia State



**Figure 5**

### Principal Officers of the 10th House of Representatives

The following principal officers emerged from a process of consultations with the leadership of political parties and among members of the House of Representatives as captured in the figure below.

# Leadership of the 10th National Assembly

## House of Representatives - Presiding Officers

### Majority Caucus



Majority Leader  
**Hon. Julius Ihonvbere**  
Owan West/East Federal  
Constituency, Edo State



Deputy Majority Leader  
**Hon. Abdullahi Ibrahim Halims**  
Ankpa/Omala/Olamaboro  
Federal Constituency, Kogi State



Chief Whip  
**Hon. Bello Usman Kumo**  
Akko Federal Constituency,  
Gombe State



Deputy Chief Whip  
**Hon. Adewunmi  
Oriyomi Onanuga**  
Ikenne/Sagamu/Remo North  
Federal Constituency, Ogun State

### Minority Caucus



Minority Leader  
**Hon. Kingsley Ogundu Chinda**  
Obio/Akpor  
Federal Constituency, Rivers State



Deputy Minority Leader  
**Hon. Ali Madaki**  
Dala Federal Constituency,  
Kano State



Minority Whip  
**Hon. Ali Isa**  
Balanga-Billiri Federal  
Constituency, Gombe State



Deputy Minority Whip  
**Hon. George Ibezimako Ozodinobi**  
LP, Njikoka/Dunukofia/Anaocha,  
Anambra State

**Figure 6**

## 5. Standing/Special Committees of the 10th National Assembly

The National Assembly exercises some of its functions through smaller units called Committees. A committee comprises a select group of legislators led by a chairman, with a deputy (or vice chairman), and several members drawn from relevant professional and political backgrounds. A committee's mandate is to undertake intensive legislative actions on a matter as directed by the Senate or House of Representatives in plenary. This includes passing a law, reviewing existing legislation, conducting investigations, and making recommendations for consideration by the respective chamber's plenary. Committees are generally created in line with the existing mandates of the government's Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs). The creation and functions of committees are spelt out in the 1999 Constitution (as amended) as well as the Rules of the Senate and House of Representatives, respectively. For instance, while the Constitution establishes the Finance and Public Accounts Committees (PACs) of both Chambers (which stipulates

in Section 85 that they must be headed by legislators from the opposition parties), the Rules Book is the basis for the other committees set up to conduct granular legislative business. While standing committees are permanent panels that discharge the National Assembly's core functions around clearly defined mandates of MDAs, special (ad-hoc) committees are established with clear terms of reference to perform specific functions after which they wind up.

**Standing/Special (Ad Hoc) Committees of the 10th Senate**

In line with the Rules Book/Standing Orders of the Senate, the President of the Senate, Godswill Akpabio, announced the composition of the Selection Committee in July 2023. This committee, which included the President of the Senate as chairman, the Deputy President of the Senate, and principal officers of the senate, was saddled with the responsibility of selecting the leadership and membership of standing/special committees. Thus, in August 2023, Sen. Akpabio unveiled the chairpersons and deputy chairpersons of 74 standing committees of the 10th Senate. While in the 9th Senate, there were 69 committees, the 10th Senate had an addition of 30 new committees, bringing the total to 99. Apart from these standing committees, the Senate also empanels some special ad-hoc committees to conduct occasional work arising from certain developments that standing committees may not be well-placed to handle. The composition of chairpersons of the Senate standing committees in terms of political parties and gender are provided in figures 7 and 8 below:

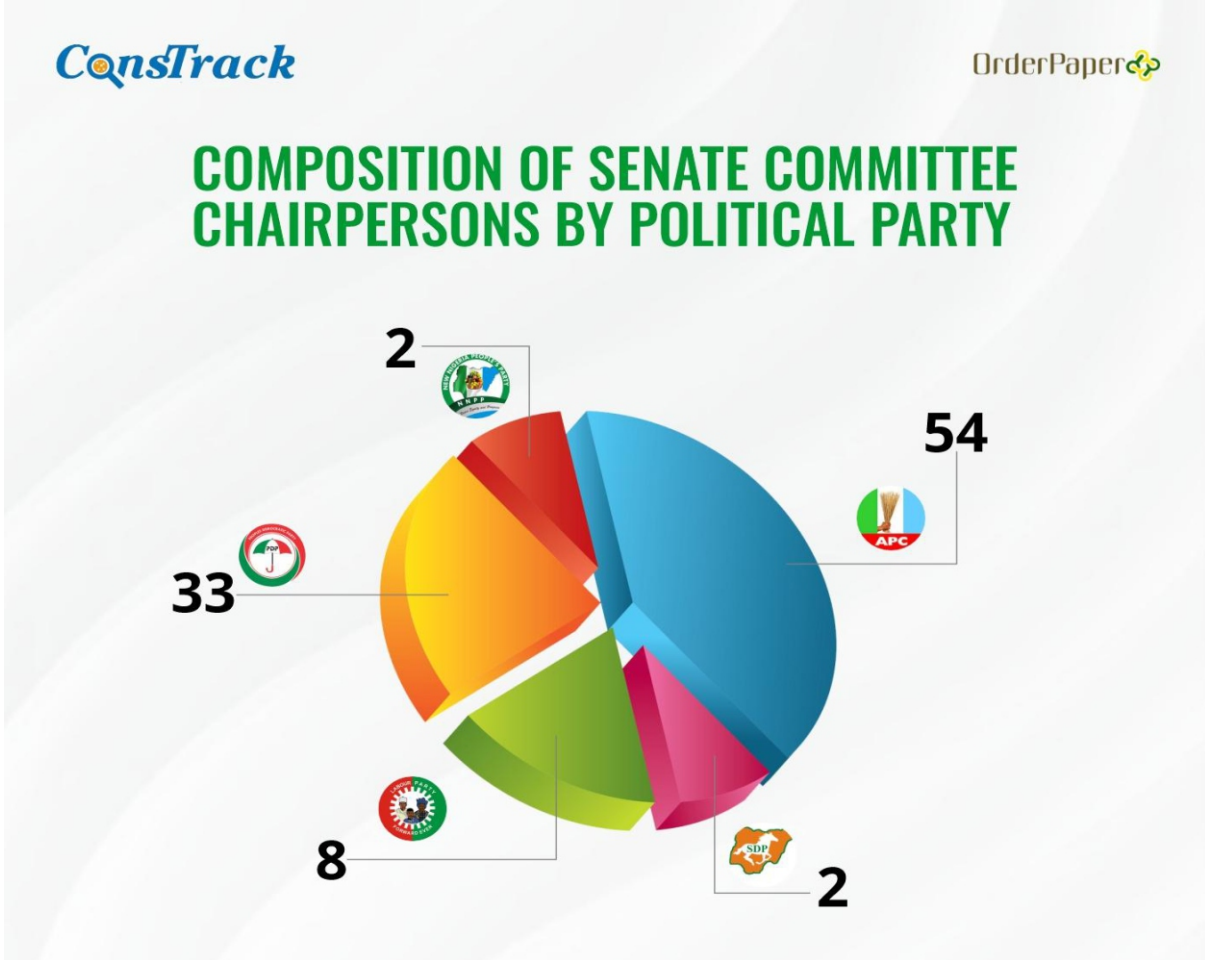
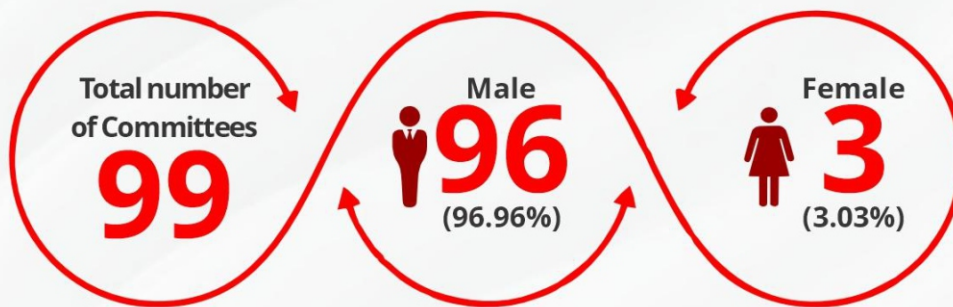


Figure 7



## COMPOSITION OF SENATE COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS BY GENDER



**Figure 8**

### Standing/Special (Ad Hoc) Committees of the 10th House of Representatives

In a similar vein, the House of Representatives Speaker, Hon. Tajudeen Abbas, announced the leadership of standing committees of the lower chamber on August 30, 2023, following the work done by a Selection Committee which he chaired. So far, the list of Committees is 134. The political party and gender composition of these Committees are shown in figures 9 and 10 below:

## COMPOSITION OF HOUSE OF REPS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS BY POLITICAL PARTY

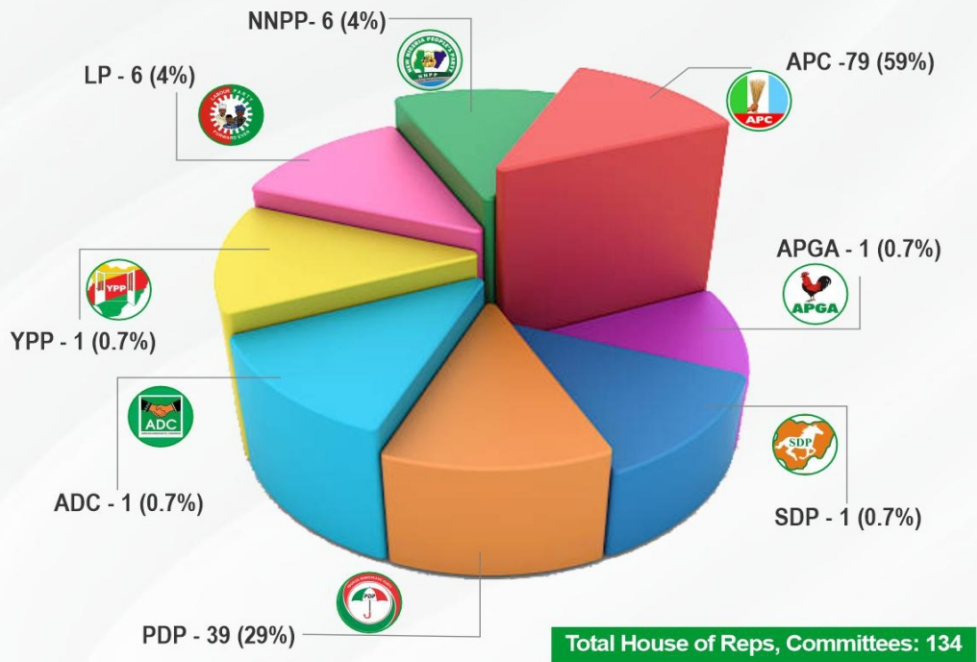


Figure 9

## COMPOSITION OF HOUSE OF REPS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS BY GENDER



Figure 10



## **6. 10th NASS, Party Influence and Consensus-building**

Political consensus is an essential factor when it comes to the operations of the National Assembly, and the 10th Assembly is no different. The 10th National Assembly takes a different shape from the previous assemblies with the emergence of a third force movement in the youth-backed Labour Party (LP) and the rejuvenated New Nigeria Peoples' Party (NNPP), amongst other key political developments. For example, consensus-building in the 10th National Assembly was demonstrated in the composition of the principal officers of the Senate and House of Representatives. For the first time in the history of the federal legislature, at least in the 4th Republic, the body of minority principal officers comprises representatives of almost all the opposition parties with a substantial number of seats.

At the level of the majority caucus, consensus-building was largely observed in the election and composition of the leadership. Note that with each assembly in the past, the ruling political party made it a norm to push forward certain legislators as its candidates for the presiding officers' positions. This tradition was however upturned in the 7th and 8th Assemblies where candidates of the ruling parties lost out due to desperate horse-trading among members of the legislature who eventually chose their leaders in disregard of party directives. This was how Sen. Bukola Saraki emerged as president of the senate against Sen. Ahmed Lawan, who was the APC choice; and Hon. Yakubu Dogara emerged against Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila as Speaker of the House of Representatives, who was the APC choice. The 10th assembly followed the norm where candidates of the ruling party, APC, emerged as presiding officers in both chambers- although a keen contest ensued in the election of the senate president and a unanimous consensus was recorded in the election of deputy president of the senate and deputy speaker of the House, respectively. The main point to note about the factor of consensus in the emergence of leaders in the legislature is the tendency to breed a pliant parliament where the executive branch gets its way on almost every issue of contention. This often gives rise to the use of the term, "rubber Stamp" to describe the assembly, being one that operates with very minimal checks and balances over the executive.

This has an important implication for policy-making in the country. This is because an executive (or President to be specific) that has little or no appetite

for bold policy reforms will influence the outputs of the parliament with respect to vibrant and proactive lawmaking and other legislative interventions that are meant to advance the public good. While the reverse is likely to be the case, experience has however shown that a legislature bound by a common set of pecuniary interests could bog down the enthusiasm and drive of a reform-focused Executive. This is why it is important to be mindful of and continually monitor the political dynamics and power asymmetry between the executive and the legislative arms of the government.

However, it is instructive that the ruling party and presidency apparatchik not only had their way in determining the presiding officers of the 10th assembly, they appeared to have been deliberate in choosing individuals who are drained of political and moral guts to ward off executive overreach because of their past and recent involvements in the polity. The president of the senate, for instance, had corruption allegations being investigated by anti-graft agencies but was pushed through to emerge as presiding officer. Political observers point to this as a reason why nominations for appointments and requests for loans, for instance, have been approved with speed to the chagrin of even senators who openly challenged him of leading the senate on a pliant path. It is believed that as long as those allegations remain hung on his neck, the presidency will find a willing accomplice to arrest attempts at vibrant checks and balances from the senate.

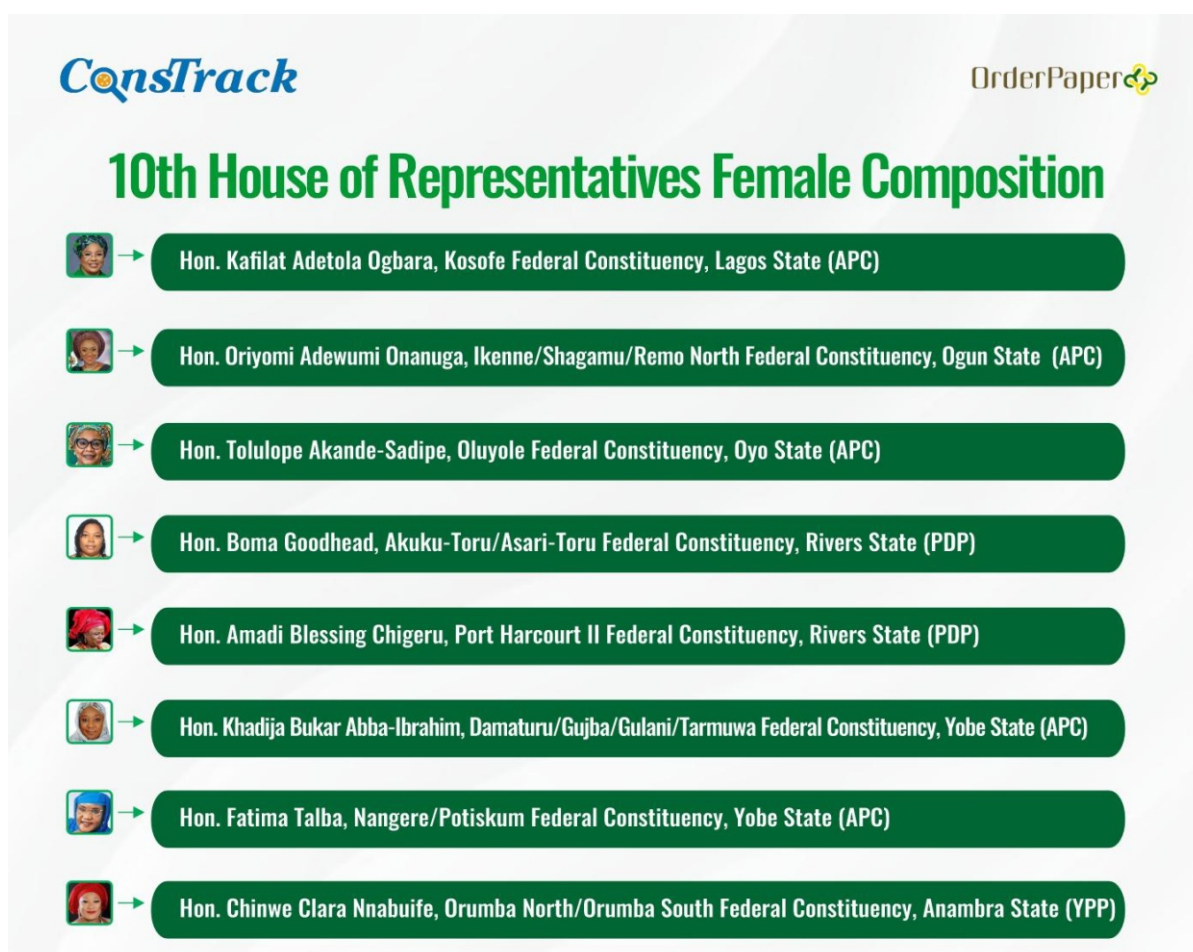
Although the minority caucus of the 10th National Assembly is diverse and promising for vibrant checks and balances, the reality of confluence of interests among legislators can tend to whittle down the expected potency and vibrancy of the opposition. This was observed in the screening of ministerial nominees by the Senate and the passage of the supplementary appropriation bill when the voice of the opposition could not be found when it mattered most (in pushing for thorough scrutiny of executive nominees and not being able to vehemently disagree with certain items provided for in the budget bill). This was also the case with the controversial purchase of SUVs for legislators - contrary to public expectation and in clear disobedience to the directive of its leadership to reject the expensive luxury vehicles, parliamentarians of the opposition Labour Party collected them and openly chided their party chairman on the matter.

## 7. GESI Analysis of the 10th National Assembly

Since Nigeria's return to democracy 24 years ago, there has been an ongoing conversation about the need for greater Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) in the country's political space, particularly within the National Assembly. Despite continuous advocacy and efforts to increase women's, youth and Persons with Disabilities (PWD) representation in the political space, the reality has yet to meet expectations.

Women play many vital roles in society. However, when it comes to the appointive and elective positions, women are underrepresented. Gender advocates and activists argue that this affects the development of the country.

In the 2023 general elections, **378 women** contested for Senate and House of Representatives seats. However, only 19 emerged victorious. Out of the **109 Senators**, only **4 (3.6%)** are women, and in the House of Representatives, only **16 (4.44%)** out of **360** members are women, making a mere **19 (4.05%)** out of the **469** representatives in the 10th Assembly. The current list of female lawmakers are captured in figures 13, 14 and 15 below (Compared to the 8th and 9th Assemblies, this is the lowest recorded, particularly in the Senate. For the 8th Assembly, while the Senate had seven female Senators, the House had 22 female Members. In the 9th Assembly, the Senate had seven female Senators, while the House had 11 female Members.)



## 10th House of Representatives Female Composition

-  → Hon. Lilian Obiageli Orogbu, Awka North/Awka South Federal Constituency, Anambra State (LP)
-  → Hon. Maureen Chinwe Gwacham, Oyi/Ayamelum Federal Constituency of Anambra State (APGA)
-  → Hon. Marie Enenimiete Ebikake, Brass-Nembe Federal Constituency of Bayelsa State (PDP)
-  → Hon. Blessing Onyeché Onuh, Otukpo/Ohimini Federal Constituency, Benue State (APC)
-  → Hon. Regina Akume, Gboko/Tarka Federal Constituency of Benue State (APC)
-  → Hon. Zainab Gimba, Bama/Ngala/Kala-Balge Federal Constituency of Borno State (APC)
-  → Hon. Erhiatake Ibori-Suenu, Ethiope East/Ethiope West Federal Constituency of Delta State (PDP)
-  → Hon. Princess Miriam Onuoha, Isiala Mbano/Okigwe/Onuimo Federal Constituency, Imo State (APC)

## 10th Senate Female Composition

-  → Sen. Idiat Oluranti Adebule → Lagos West (APC)
-  → Sen. Ipalibo Banigo → Rivers West (PDP)
-  → Sen. Irete Heebah Kingibe → FCT Senatorial District, FCT (LP)
-  → Sen. Natasha Akpoti-Uduaghan → Kogi Central (PDP)

Figures 11, 12 and 13

Although female representation is a minor increase from 18 (3.84%) in the 9th Assembly, the 10th Assembly still falls short of achieving gender equality and social inclusion, particularly when compared to the 8th National Assembly, which saw 29 female representatives in the House of Representatives. One would have expected it to get better.

The situation is further worsened by some states having no female representatives in the National Assembly, as female lawmakers in the National Assembly are from only 12 states, including Anambra, Bayelsa, Benue, Borno, Delta, Imo, Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers and Yobe, despite Nigeria having 36 states in total. It underscores the pressing need for proactive measures to bridge the gender equality and social inclusion gap.

Also, social inclusion involves ensuring that diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives are represented. However, In the 10th Assembly, the representation of youth (35 and below, according to the Not-Too-Young-To-Run Act) is alarmingly low, with only 8 out of 469 representatives falling within this demographic, totalling a mere 1.71%. These youth representatives in the 10th assembly include:

1. Hon. Ibrahim Bello Mohammed (Birnin Kebbi/Bunzai/Kalgo Federal Constituency, Kebbi State) - 27 years
2. Hon. Akarachi Amadi ( Mbaitoli/Ikeduru Federal Constituency, Imo State) - 29 years
3. Hon. Abdulhakeem Kamilu Ado (Wudil/Garko Federal Constituency, Kano State) - 29 years
4. Hon. Muktar Tolani Shagaya (Ilorin West/ Asa Federal Constituency, Kwara State) - 33 years
5. Hon. Yusuf Ahmed Doro (Bindawa/Mani Federal Constituency, Katsina State) - 34 years
6. Hon. Usman Basiru Gorau (Gada-Goronyo Federal Constituency, Sokoto State) - 35 years
7. Hon. Mathew Donatus Kuzalio ( Kaura Federal Constituency, Kaduna State) - 35 years
8. Hon. El-Rufai Mohammed Bello (Kaduna North Federal Constituency, Kaduna State) - 35 years

The geographical distribution of these youth representatives is confined to states such as Kwara, Katsina, Kaduna, Kebbi, Sokoto, Imo, and Kano. While these representatives bring a youthful perspective, their limited number and regional concentration raise questions about the comprehensiveness of youth representation in the national context, considering Nigeria's 36 states.

The current representation gap in the 10th Assembly highlights a potential



disconnect between legislative decisions and the varied concerns of the nation's youth.

Adding to these concerns, the absence of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) in the 10th Assembly compounds the issue of representation. The exclusion of PWDs raises questions about the commitment of the political class to reflecting the entire spectrum of Nigerian demographics.

This situation emphasises the pressing need for a more inclusive political environment accommodating diverse voices and experiences. The youth and PWDs, particularly those from marginalised backgrounds, must have a more significant role in shaping legislative decisions that impact their communities.

Achieving gender equality and social inclusion in the National Assembly is not just a matter of fairness but crucial for the nation's development and progress. The road ahead may be challenging, but Nigeria can work towards a more inclusive and equitable political space through persistent advocacy, legislative reform, and societal change.

## **8. The 10th NASS, Public Participation, and Citizen Engagement**

Citizen engagement and participation in the legislative process are crucial for a functioning democracy. In Nigeria, where the National Assembly holds significant power in shaping the nation's policies and legal environment, the active involvement of citizens and civil society plays a vital role. Citizens can foster transparency, accountability, and good governance in Nigeria by engaging and participating in legislative activities.

The 10th Assembly, particularly the House of Representatives, has shown interest in citizens and civil society engagement. First, as captured in its 16-point legislative agenda and a couple of civil society engagements with the Speaker and his aides, the House has demonstrated a drive to foster a culture of collaboration and public participation. The Speaker, in addition, has created a Programmes Coordinating Unit (PCU) under his office for ease of engagement and communication with civil society. The OrderPaper is already leveraging this mechanism, among other assets and networks OrderPaper has built within the legislature over the years. The House also harnessed citizens' input to its Legislative Agenda to help meet the yearnings and aspirations of citizens and with which they would use as a benchmark to evaluate and assess legislative performance after four years.

The 10th Senate has been less than forthcoming in terms of citizen engagement and public participation. Although events are still unfolding, this



does not bode well for the pursuit of people-centric policies.

## **9. The Legislative Agenda of the 10th National Assembly**

Legislative Agenda has become the common term to describe the four-year plan of policies and actions by the National Assembly. The agenda often encapsulates a social program of proposed legislation to support policies and programs of government that would help speed up development and reforms that will better the lives of citizens. These are achieved via set goals, steps, and legislative actions to be taken. Additionally, the agenda serves as a tool for members of the public and the lawmakers themselves to assess their performance periodically and at the end of the Assembly.

### **The Legislative Agenda of the 10th House of Representatives**

While it is not a legal requirement for legislative proceedings, the tradition of setting a Legislative Agenda in the House of Representatives began in the 7th Assembly under former Speaker Aminu Waziri Tambuwal, who came up with some priority issues that the House had to address during its tenure.

In line with this, the 10th House of Representatives, shortly after its inauguration in June 2023, unveiled its proposed Legislative Agenda. The 16-point agenda focuses on improved national assembly delivery process, Executive-Legislative engagement, Constitutional reforms, Electoral reforms, advancement of innovation and technology, socio-economic reform for growth and development, education, anti-corruption, re-engineering Nigeria's foreign policy, civil society and citizens' engagement, women participation and inclusion, human rights, the environment, green energy and climate, youth development, science and technology and institution building. Having gathered input from stakeholders, including civil society, the House adopted the final draft of the House legislative agenda at plenary on November 10, 2023.

### **The Legislative Agenda of the 10th Senate**

As of the time of finishing up this QPR on the 10th National Assembly, the 10th Senate has yet to release a legislative agenda.

### **Tracking the 10th Assembly Legislative Agenda**

A significant highlight of past and present Assemblies in Nigeria is often the unveiling of legislative agendas of both the Senate and House of

Representatives. These agendas are meant to be reflective of current social, economic, and political situations in the country and how to proffer solutions. While these agendas may look well thought out on paper, effective tracking and the willingness to implement are often lacking, leading to partial or poor fulfilment of the legislative agenda.

But this is where the role of citizens comes into play. And there are a number of reasons why this is important. Firstly, tracking of legislative agenda enables citizens to access legislative performance and petition for better service delivery where the legislators fall short. Civil society actors and private sector players are able to check which items of the agendas align with their goals and objectives and then create engagements accordingly. Secondly, performance tracking enables citizens to make informed decisions when voting for representatives seeking re-election. By being proactive in tracking the legislative agenda, Nigerian citizens can boost transparency, strengthen accountability, and contribute to shaping the country's democracy.

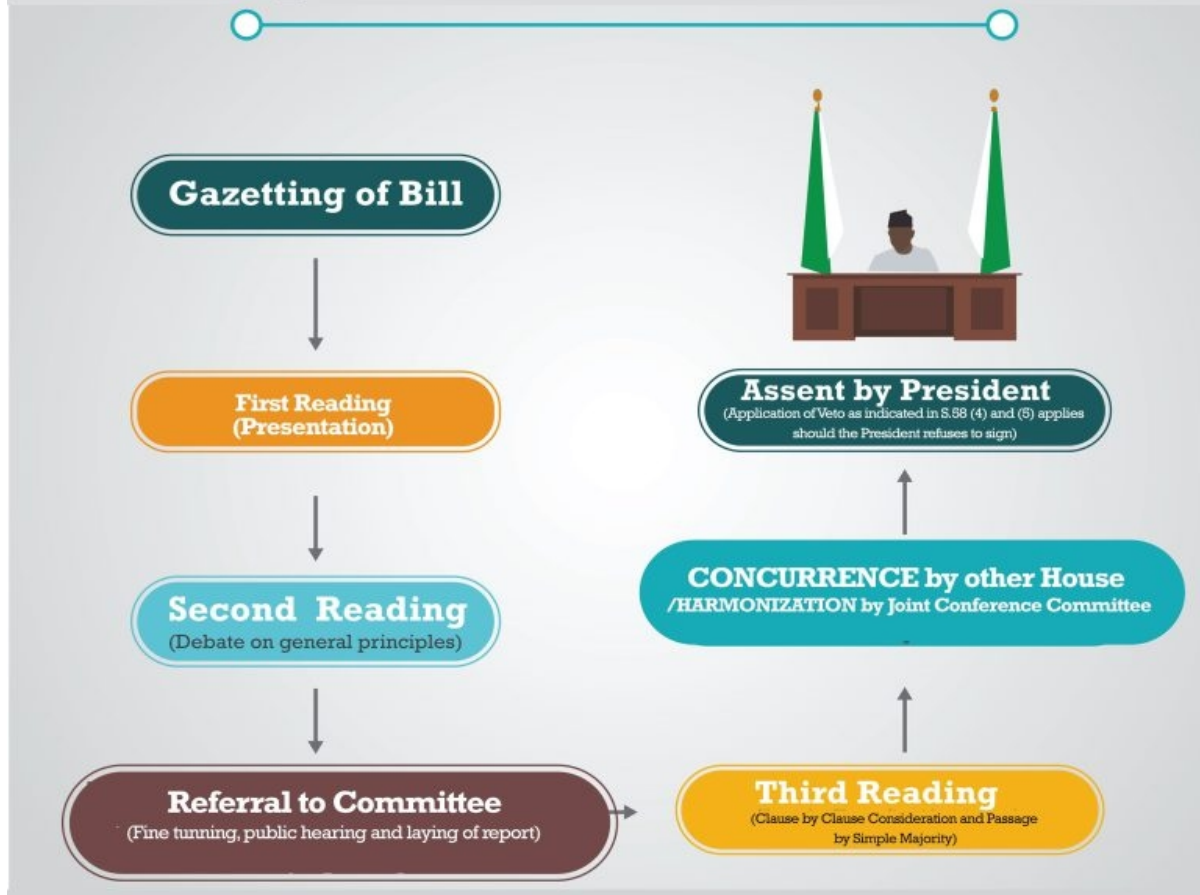
As indicated earlier, it is important to keep tabs on the legislative agenda because achieving progress on these agendas will equate to positive outcomes of a people-centred representation. Gleaning from the words of Mr Speaker that the Houses' "desire is to have a legislative agenda that meets the yearnings and aspirations of citizens and with which they would use as a benchmark to evaluate and assess our (the 10th House) performance after four years," it behoves on citizens, civil society, and the private sector to track the implementation of the agenda.

## **10. Steps to Lawmaking: How the 10th Assembly Bills Could Become Laws**

The process of lawmaking is a vital component of democratic governance. It encompasses multiple steps, from idea generation to the creation of binding laws. Transparency, accountability, and public input are key principles that guide this process. Understanding these steps is vital for citizens to actively engage in the democratic process and for lawmakers to create effective, just, and needed laws that govern the citizens.

Before a Law (Act) comes into existence, it first comes in the form of a bill brought before the Senate or House of Representatives. A bill could be sponsored either by the President (Executive Bill), a member of the House of Representatives (House Bill), or a Senator (Senate Bill). It then goes through various stages in both chambers of the National Assembly before becoming a law. Figure 16 below provides steps to how a bill becomes a law.

# 7 Steps for a Bill to become Law



The journey of how bills become laws – from proposal to the binding instrument – reflects the democratic values and principles of the country to ensure laws are effective and in the people's best interest. The above steps are a roadmap for the complex but essential journey to making laws.

## 11. 10th Assembly Legislative Business So Far

About a month after the inauguration of the 10th Assembly, both the House of Representatives and the Senate delved into the legislative duties of lawmaking and oversight. These duties are expressed through bills processing and adoption of motions. For the House, this process began with the first bill being sponsored by the Speaker, Honourable Tajudeen Abass, on July 5, 2023.

As indicated in the previous chapter, a bill is a proposed legislation that seeks to modify an existing law or create a new one. Bills have legal backing and cover a wide range of topics, from finance and infrastructure to social policies and governance. They go through readings, debates, and voting stages in both houses of the National Assembly before being sent to the President for assent to become law. While a bill before the House is marked HB (House Bill), a bill before the Senate is marked SB (Senate Bill).

## Bills Chart

There are five categories of bills generally processed in parliament, viz: Establishment bills, Amendment bills, Enactment bills, Repeal and Money bills.

Establishment bills seek for the creation of a government Ministry, Department, or Agency (MDA) and provide for the guiding principles of operations. Establishment bills also seek for the creation of tertiary institutions and health centres, among others.

Amendment bills are proposed legislation that aims to modify or change specific provisions within an existing law or constitution. These bills provide an outline of the proposed alterations, additions, or deletions to existing legal frameworks.

Repeal bills seek to abolish or revoke some provision of an existing law. While it shares features with an amendment bill, a repeal becomes an amendment bill if the provisions it seeks to abolish make up 40 percent of the existing law.

An Enactment bill aims to introduce a new law or statute. This type of bill can also seek to establish a legal framework for a particular issue or area that is not currently covered by existing legislation.

A Money bill primarily deals with matters related to taxation, public expenditure, or government revenue. These bills focus on financial issues, including the imposition, reduction, or collection of taxes, borrowing money, government spending, appropriation of funds, or any matter related to the country's finances.

## Motions Chart

Unlike a bill, a motion is a request made by a lawmaker or a group of lawmakers on any issue relevant to the public interest during parliamentary proceedings. A motion, when adopted, becomes a resolution. Motions are divided into three: Investigative, Infrastructural, and motion of urgent importance.

An Investigative motion is a formal request by a member of the legislature for a probe into a particular issue of public concern. The motion often seeks to mandate a committee to gather information, collect evidence, scrutinise a matter and make recommendations to plenary. It allows for a structured and official process to investigate issues ranging from government actions, policies, or allegations of wrongdoing in various sectors to ensure transparency and accountability.

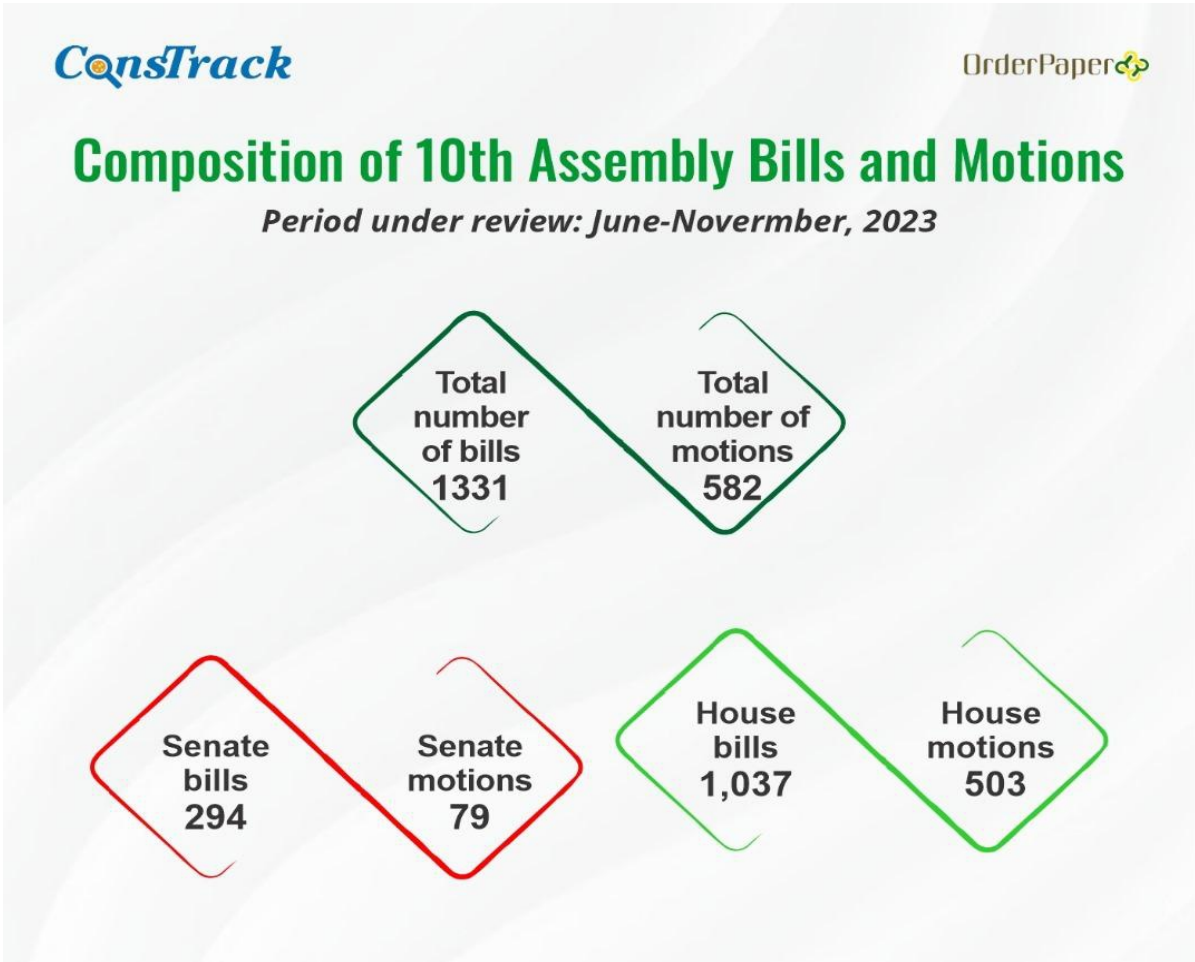
An Infrastructural motion, however, focuses on constructing or rehabilitating physical structures in the country, such as roads, bridges, railways, hospitals, and other public facilities. The motion often aims to allocate resources and funding for infrastructure development.

A motion of Urgent Importance is a procedure allowing members to raise immediate and critical matters that require immediate attention or action by the legislature. This category of motions addresses a pressing issue, emergency, or event that demands

swift consideration and resolution by the parliament.

Trajectory of Bills and Motions by the 10th Assembly

Within the space of five months from inauguration (June–November, 2023), a total of **1331** bills and **582** motions have come before the National Assembly, as at the time of reporting this PEA. Of these numbers, **1,037** bills and **503** motions were moved before the House; and **294** bills and **79** motions moved in the Senate. These bills are at different stages of progress, either first or second reading committee stage or third reading. None has been passed for presidential assent this far. (See figure 17) These numbers were tracked from the order paper made available by each chamber (Senate and House of Representatives) on plenary days. Additionally, these bills and motions were tracked through physical and virtual attendance of plenary by designated members of the **OrderPaper** team.

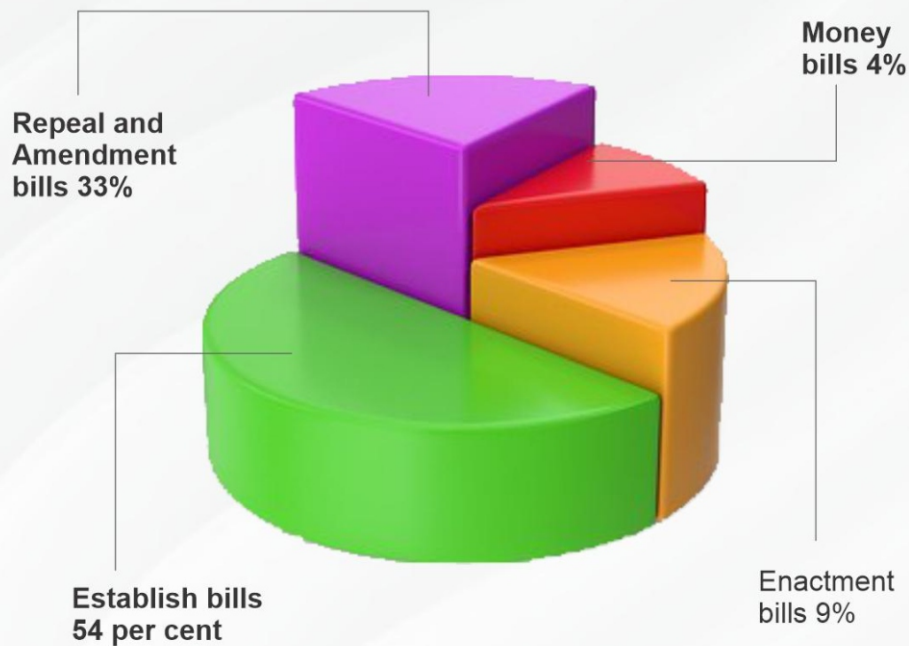


**Figure 14**

A further breakdown of these bills shows that **54** per cent of these bills are establishment; **33%** are repeal and amendment; **9%** are enactment; and **4%** are money bills, notable among which is the 2024 Appropriation bill sponsored by the Executive. (See Figure 18).

## Composition of 10th Assembly Bills and Motions by Sector

Period under review: June-November, 2023



**Figure 15**

It is to be noted that within the period under review, some key motions on Nigeria's fiscal management space were brought before the National Assembly, leading to the setting up of ad-hoc committees to undertake further investigations. Notable among these is the Committee on Crude Oil Theft set up by the House tasked to investigate crude oil theft and revenue losses from oil and gas companies. While the committee has since concluded its findings and laid a report before the House, no further action has been taken on the matter.

### Investigations

True to its responsibility of oversight, the National Assembly undertakes probes into the activities of the federal government's ministries, departments, and agencies (MDAs) to check waste and corruption. So far, following over **579** motions brought before both chambers, the 10th Assembly has launched over **50** probes aiming to dig into alleged malfeasance, and mismanagement of funds and other infractions by MDAs, directing either standing or ad-hoc committees to carry out the exercise



within specified time frame.

Some major probes so far undertaken by the 10th assembly include the following:

### **i. Alleged IPPIS fraud in universities**

The Senate debated a motion and asked its Committee on Tertiary Institutions and TETFund to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption levelled against officials of the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System at various universities across the federation. The impact on the final report is yet to be seen

#### **ii. NDDC's N6.5bn shoreline protection contract in Ondo**

The Senate resolved to investigate the N6.5 billion-shoreline protection contract awarded by the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) in 2006. Since the Committee on Niger Delta Affairs was urged to look into the urgent need to save Aiyetoro from going into extinction due to the sea incursion, not much has been heard on the outcome of this investigation.

### **iii. N483bn loan disbursement**

The Senate is probing the alleged uneven disbursement of intervention loans to the tune of N483 billion by the Development Bank of Nigeria (DBN) in the six geopolitical zones. It raised a seven-man ad-hoc committee to probe the matter but no feedback yet on the matter.

### **iv. Job 'racketeering' in MDAs**

In the House of Representatives, one of the ongoing major probes which have been raising a lot of controversies and mind-blowing revelations is the one on alleged job racketeering and mismanagement of the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) by Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). There is yet to be a closure on the matter.

### **v. Alleged non-remittance of N2trn, and other taxes by NNPC Limited**

In July, the House of Representatives mandated its finance committee to investigate an alleged non-remittance of N2trn and other due taxes by the Nigerian National Petroleum Company Limited into the federation account.

### **vi. \$4bn crude oil theft**

In a similar scenario, on July 12, the House of Representatives resolved to investigate alleged crude oil theft to the tune of \$4 billion to curb economic loss to the country

and ensure that everyone involved was brought to book. Since the House received the report from the Ad-hoc Committee on Oil Theft, nothing else has been heard on the matter.

## **Screening and Confirmations of Ministerial Nominees**

In line with constitutional dictates, the list of ministerial nominees was first sent to the Senate after President Bola Ahmed Tinubu spent 60 days in office. While the nominees were sent out in batches for screening, 45 out of 48 were confirmed without notable rigour. There were many instances where no questions were asked in the notorious take-a-bow tradition conferred on nominees by the whims of the legislators. Nominees that were not confirmed were as a result of adverse security reports on them. Ministerial nominees cleared by the Senate included 18 of whom had served as lawmakers at some point.

## **Extra-parliamentary interventions**

In most democratic settings, the Parliament is the medium through which the people's voices are heard. While citizens do not directly interface with the National Assembly, their needs are expressed through their elected legislators. This is achieved when the legislator effectively carries out duties of representation, lawmaking and oversight in the people's best interest.

Focusing on the duty of representation, occasionally, the need arises for legislators to embark on some extra-parliamentary interventions. These interventions do not necessarily involve plenary proceedings or Committee hearings. Therefore, it is expected to see the National Assembly step in to mediate or proffer solutions to address specific socio-economic, political or environmental issues affecting the well-being of Nigerians. In this regard, the House of Representatives has held what it termed 'sectoral debates' with actors in the executive branch of the government. The 10th National Assembly has intervened on a number of socio-economic issues that pervaded the nation, including mediating in labour strikes.

## **12. Conclusion**

The composition, character and tone of the 10th National Assembly constitute major political-economy factors that will engender a transparent, inclusive and accountable legislature. As indicated in this QPR, one of the significant challenges facing the 10th Assembly is the high turnover of members, as a large percentage of lawmakers who sought reelection could not secure a return to the National Assembly. While this development may pose a significant downside to legislative effectiveness as much institutional memory has been lost, it could also be a gain if the vibrancy of new legislators could be positively harnessed to effect productive checks and balances on the executive.

On the other hand, the 10th House of Representatives has emerged with some innovation and inclination to operate an open and inclusive parliament. This can be seen in its 16-point legislative agenda that was drafted in consultation with CSO partners and the public, amongst others. The thematic areas of policy reforms, civil society and citizen engagement within the agenda provide a leeway for improved inclusion of the public. Another example of the House's inclination to operate an inclusive Assembly is the revival of the Programmes Coordinating Unit under the office of the Speaker. The PCU was created to harmonise and coordinate partnerships with civil society organisations (CSOs), non-governmental organisations, and donor agencies to strengthen the capacity of the National Assembly.

However, the dynamics at the Senate differ from the House. Members of the upper chamber have been reported to tackle the President of the Senate over alleged high-handedness and arbitrariness. This is not a good sign for civic engagement with this chamber. Also, the swift nature of the Senate's approval of executive requests, particularly on increased borrowing without exhaustive legislative processing and broad-based consultations, has been a cause for concern both within and outside the chamber. Furthermore, while the Senate alludes to having a legislative agenda, its content is yet to be made public.

In summary, this QPR is a useful guide towards tracking the new assembly on accountability, inclusion and service delivery.

### **13. Postscript: The 10th NASS and the Governance Prognosis**

There is a general yearning for a National Assembly that is transparent, can ensure economic recovery considering the current harsh economic realities, huge debt profiles and existing gaps in Nigeria's fiscal space. The 10th Assembly is not expected to go the way of the 9th in being overly complacent with the Bola Tinubu-led administration at all times but to take adequate steps towards exercising its mandates for the benefit of the people. This is in addition to being able to hold the executive accountable for all its policies and actions. What this would entail is the proper scrutiny of the national budget in a way that can support the economy. However, given the speed of approval of money bills brought before the lawmakers by the executive, with little to scrutiny, it would call for close monitoring of legislative activities by an active citizenry.

The assembly has already invited the participation of citizens in some of its affairs. This is in addition to existing constitutional and statutory provisions that guarantee the primacy of the rights and interests of the citizens in a democracy. Thus, all Nigerians, acting in groups or alone, must rise up to the duty of holding legislators to account for service delivery in all facets of national life.





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