

Views of the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the Visitation Report into the Affairs of the University of Calabar

(2016 - 2020)

DECEMBER, 2022

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WHITE PAPER ON THE REPORTOFTHEVISITATION PANELINTOTHEAFFAIRS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR

(2016-2020)



ARRANGEMENT OF PARAGRAPHS

Paragraph.

- 1. Publication of Federal Government White Paper on the Report of the Visitation Panel into the Affairs of the University of Calabar (2016-2020).
- 2. Citation.

SCHEDULE

WHITE PAPER ON THE REPORT OF THE VISITATION PANEL INTO THE AFFAIRS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR (2016-2020)

1. The Federal Government White Paper on the Report of the Visitation Panel into the affairs of the University of Calabar (2016-2020) as provided in the schedule to this Notice is hereby published in the Federal Government Gazette.

Publication of Federal Government White Paper on the Report of the Visitation Panel into the affairs of the University of Calabar (2016-2020).

2. This Notice may be cited as the "White Paper on the Report of the Visitation Panel into the affairs of the University of Calabar (2016-2020)".

Citation.

- [i.e. Governing Council, National Universities Commission and Federal Ministry of Education];
- (vii) examine the Law establishing the University including the relationship between the various internal organs, units and of fices, and indicate the ways the Law has been observed by the competent authorities, and also suggest any modifications to the Law;
- (viii) Trace the historical evolution of the University and take stock of its net achievements and problems as well as its style and direction;
- (ix) examine the general security in the University and how the University has dealt with it, and recommend appropriate measures; and
- (x) examine the processes and structures of discipline of students in each University in line with due process of the rule of law.
- 1.3. Details of the Findings/Observations and Recommendations of the Visitation Panel, as well as the comments indicating recommendations accepted, noted or rejected by the Visitor are contained in a tabular format in sections 2 11 of this gazette. The highlights of the Visitor's directives include:
 - (i) Council to ensure the implementation of the Visitor's directives in the previous white paper;
 - (ii) Council should prioritise computerisation of the Registry;
 - (iii) OAGF should investigate the level of compliance with the TSA policy;
 - (iv) Management should commence the process of getting NUC to undertake resource verification, preparatory to the accreditation of the PT degree programmes;
 - (v) Management should adhere to extant financial regulations and circulars;
 - (vi) Management should take urgent steps to document and publish an Accounting Manual;
 - (vii) Management should take urgent actions to restructure and consolidate the Charts of Accounts being used in the Bursary;
 - (viii) Management should restructure and consolidate her Banking Accounts;
 - (ix) FME and TETFund should intensify their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms for projects;
 - (x) Council should activate her Budget/Projects Supervision and Monitoring Committee;
 - (xi) Management of the University should institute mechanisms to optimally harness the IGR potential of the University;
 - (xii) Council should take urgent steps to sanitize the bursary unit of fraudulent staff;

- (xxxiii) Council should ensure that employment is demand-driven; and (xxxiv) Council should ensure that the Registry is digitized urgently.
- 1.4. OTHER MATTERS: PETITION AND MEMOS: The Council is directed to review and appropriately address all memorandum from stakeholders and petitions from individuals, received by the panel and contained in the report.

| S/No. | ltem | Observations/Findings by the Visitation Panel | Recommendations by the Visitation Panel | Comments by the Visitor |
|-------|------|---|---|--|
| | | APPLICATION OF FUNDS The University benefitted from a special grant of N3.0bn as well as N4.2bn from NEEDS assessments. These were used for the execution of very essential projects. Numerous efforts were made including visitation to get NDDC to complete their abandoned project, but all proved abortive until the imbroglio being witnessed in the Commission. They are looking forward to favourable response when the whole dust settles down. Staffing (i) Staffing ratios had not been achieved. (ii) The ratio of teaching staff is still skewed in favour of the non-teaching staff. (iii) Additional technologists have been employed but more hands are still needed due to expansion of programmes. (iv) Provision of power and numerous sundry expenses needed to run the system has, according to the University, made this extra burden on IGR not feasible. | | Management to ensure compliance. (v) Visitor notes that the matter of encraached land afthe University is still in court and directs Council to seek amicable reconciliatian with host communities. (vi) Visitor nates that the extension of the perimeter walls to all of the University boundaries has not been achieved and directs Cauncil to prioritise this need and implement. (vii) Visitor notes that the mast destroyed by rainstorm is yet to be replaced and enjoins Management ta take urgent steps ta replace same. |

TERM OF REFERENCE TWO

"Look into the leadership quality of the University in terms of the roles of the Governing Council, the Vice Chancellor and other Principal Officers."

| S/Na | Item | Observations/Findings by the Visitation Panel | Recommendations by the Visitation Panel | Comments by the Visitor |
|------|---------------------|--|---|--|
| 3.1. | CHANCELLOR | The University has been without a Chancellor since the death of the last Chancellor. | A new Chancellor should be ap- pointed. | Visitor notes this recommendation and is aware that a new Chancellor has been appointed. |
| 32. | Vice- Chancellor | | (i) The newadministration should carry the incoming Council along. (ii) The new Council and Administration should develop a bottom-up Strategic plan geared towards addressing, in concrete terms, already established challenges. | Visitor notes these recommendations. |
| 3.3. | REGISTRAR | | (i) The Management should endeavor to provide adequate accommodation to enhance productivity of staff of the Registry. (ii) Prioritize computerization of the Registry. | (i) Visitor notes recommendation (i). (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii) and directs that Management should prioritise the computerisation and digitalisation of the Registry. |
| 3.4. | The Librarian | (i) No Academic Brief. (ii) There is a need for professionalism in this unit. | Due attention should be paid to the requirements of the library in terms of physical and ICT infrastructural needs. | Visitor notes this recommen- dation. |

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| | | the knowledge of the Unit. (vii) not honouring the Interim Payment Certificates (IPCs) as and when due (within a month of approval of IPC). Contractors most times have to wait or lobby to receive their payment (viii) the delay in payment of IPCs has led to fluctuation claims by | by the Visitation Panel | by the Visitor |
| | | some of the contractors, due to the fluctuating prices of building materials, thereby affecting the delivery of the projects. (ix) change of scope(s) and location(s) of some projects leading to variation. | | |
| 3.6. | Works and Maintenance Department | | The Management should strengthen the Works Department to achieve greater productivity and effectiveness. | Visitor notes this recommen- dation. |
| 3.7. | Academic Planning Unit | (i) The Unit produced a 10-year draft Academic Brief for 2017-2026. However, the Unit requires capacity building to be able to develop proper Academic Brief acceptable to NUC. (ii) The Unit needs to be professionalized. | Capacity of staff should be built while ensuring some degree of professionalism of DAP. | Visitor notes this recommen- dation. |

TERM OF REFERENCE THREE

"Look into the financial management of the Institution including statutory allocation and internally generated revenue over the recommended period, and determine whether it was in compliance with appropriate Regulations."

| S/Na. | Item | Observations/Findings by the Visitation Panel | Recommendations by the Visitation Panel | Comments by the Visitor |
|-------|--|---|--|---|
| 4.1. | ACCOUNTING MANUALS AND CHARTS OF ACCOUNT | No Accounting Manual | (i) Document and publish Accounting Manual. (ii) Restructure and consolidate the Charts of Accounts being used in the Bursary. | Visitor accepts these recom- mendations and directs Council to ensure imple- mentation. |
| 42. | Banking | Before the introduction of the Treasury Single Account (TSA) policy, the University runs multiple accounts but now maintains few accounts including students' fees accounts with the UNICAL Microfinance Bank Ltd. | Office of Accountant General of the Federation should urgently investigate the compliance level of the University with the provisions of the TSA policy of the Federal government with respect to opening and operating of accounts with Commercial banks, Microfinance banks as well as Nonbank financial institutions. | Visitor accepts this recommendation and directs Council and Office of Accountant General of the Federation to investigate banking activities of the University and ensure TSA compliance. |
| 4.3. | PAYMENT OF TAXES | (i) The Externally Audited Accounts of the University for years ended December 31,2016 and 2017 were silent on the issues of statutory deductions made by the University on behalf of tax authorities and remittance status; (ii) The Externally Unaudited Accounts of the University for years ended December 31,2018,2019 and 2020 | Standard practice of remitting all statutory tax deductions made at source without delay to relevant tax authorities should be observed. | Visitor accepts this recommendalion and directs Management to ensure compliance or face appropriate sanction for defaulting. |

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| 4.7. | PERFORMANCE OF THE BURSARY | (i) poor record keeping (omission of entries, incorrect entries, duplication of entries); (ii) inability to respond to audit queries from the Internal Audit Directorate etc.; (iii) ledgers not being kept up to date; (iv) bank reconciliations not being done timely; (v) payment vouchers not being properly written, checked, controlled and filed; (vi) none maintenance of a Fixed Asset Register; (vii) absence of a manual of accounts; and (viii) Financial Rules and Regulations of 2000 not updated; (ix) Alleged cases of financial impropriety, and unprof essional activities. | (i) Fully computerize, automate and integrate all sections and accounting and treasury operations of the Bursary unit. (ii) Build technical and managerial capacities of staff. (iii) Council should take urgent steps to sanitize the bursary unit of fraudulent staff. (iv) Council should commission a wider and more comprehensive forensic investigation of the accounts and financial management activities of the University to cover the period 201 1-2020. | Visitor accepts these recom- mendations and directs Council to ensure imme- diate implemen- tation and carry out forensic au- dit on issues raised and re- port back to FME. Appropri- ate disciplinary action applied where need be. |
| 4.8. | THE PROCUREMENT UNIT | (i) Inefficient and ineffective. (ii) Not professionalized. (iii) No Statutory Procurement Committees. (iv) Technical Evaluation Committee not properly constituted. Evidence of University Tenders Committee meetings for award of contracts were lacking. (v) Anumber of alleged instances of contracts splitting as well as other improprieties being investigated. | (i) Carry out comprehensive audit of contracts awarded. (ii) Management should urgently professionalize the Procurement Unit. | (i) Visitor accepts recommendation (i) and directs Council to carry out a comprehensive audit of all contracts awarded by the Procurement Unit for the period 2011 - 2020 without further delay. (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii) and directs Management lo |

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| | | | set up its own Audit Sub-Committee and ensure that the Committee receives quarterly Audit reports on financial management activities of the University for presentation to Council. | mendation (iii) and di- rects Council to ensure com- pliance. |
| 4.10. | STATUTORY PUBLIC FUNDS: CAPITAL AND RECURRENT ALLOCATIONS | The total subventions to the University from the Federal Government increased from N8.483 billion in 2016 to the highest of N13.564 billion in 2018, before drastically reducing to just N1.234 billion in 2020. | Increase capital and overheads subven- tions. | Visitor notes this recommen- dation. |
| 4.11. | OTHER PUBLIC FUNDS INTERVENTIONS | Public funds interventions received from NEEDS Assessment and TETFund: a total of Three Billion, Nine Hundred and Fifteen Million, Twelve Thousand, Nine Hundred and Sixty-two-naira, eighty-one Kobo was received. | (i) The Intervention agencies (NEEDS Assessment Projects office and TETFund) must intensify their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms to ensure prudence and value-formoney are observed by management of the University. | (i) Visitor notes recommenda- tion (i). |
| | | | (ii) Council should activate her Budget/Projects Supervision and Monitoring Committee to ensure that due process is followed. | (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii) and directs Council to ensure compliance. |
| 4.12. | INTERNALLY GENERATED REVENUE (IGR) RECEIVED | A total of Eight Billion, Five Hundred and Twelve Million, Eight Hundred and Seventeen Thousand, One Hundred and Sixty-four Naira, eleven kobo (N8,512,817,164.11) only was generated. | (i) Institute mechanisms to optimally harness the IGR potential of the University through increased transparency and accountability in the management of IGR. | (i) Visitor notes recommend a-tion (i). (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii). |

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| | | mary and Panel's assessment are presented in Table 6.5. | nal audit of the ac- counting and finan- cial management of the University. | |
| | | | (ii) Management must, as a matter of policy, ensure that the bursary unit update all books and ledgers at the end of the accounting and financial years to ensure the external audit is done immediately and presented to Council for approval. | (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii) and directs Management to ensure compliance. |
| | | | (iii) Council must, as a matter of policy, have a standing Audit Sub-Committee of Council for the purpose of receiving and evaluating the report of the external auditors and make recommendations to Council thereof. | Visitor notes recommenda- tion (iii). |

| S/Na | Item | Observations/Findings by the Visitation Panel | Recommendations by the Visitation Panel | Camments by the Visitor |
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| | | University at a total contract sum of Two Billion, Seven Hundred and Forty-seven Million, Fifty-seven Thousand, Six Hundred and Ninety-two Naira, sixtynine kobo (N2,747,057, 692.69). (iii) Fourteen (14) NEEDS ASSESSMENT Intervention Funds projects contracts, | procurement management in the University. (ii) The University Management must take urgent steps to restructure and professionalize the Procurement Unit of the University and staff it with appropriate skilled human capital. | (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii). |
| | | whose total contract sum was One Billion, One Hundred and Sev- enty-Nine Million, Four Hundred and Twenty-six Thousand, Seventy-nine Naira, Forty-four Kobo (N1,179,426,079.44), were fully completed. | (iii) The University Management must set up mechanisms that ensures that progress made by contractors as it relates to projects' scope are tracked and documented at least every month, to en- | (iii) Visitor accepts recommendation (iii) |
| | | (iv) Four (4) of the eighteen (18) NEEDS ASESSMENT Projects with a total contract sum of One Billion, Five Hundred and Seventy-seven Million, Six Hundred and Thirty- one Thousand, Six Hundred and Thirty-one Naira, Twenty-five kobo only (N1,577,631,631.25) remained uncompleted and abandoned after a total sum of One Hundred and Seventy- | sure percentages of projects completions are easily determined. (iv) The University Council should urgently commission a Forensic Auditing of the NEEDS ASSESSMENT Intervention projects account of the university with the objective of finding out the whereabouts of the sum of Three Billion, Five Hundred and thirteen Million, One | (iv) Visitor accepts recommendation (iv) and directs urgent investigation and sanction any person found liable. |
| | | seven Million, One Hundred and Thirty- four Thousand, Four Hundred and Seventy- Three Naira, Fifty-three kobo (N177,134,4 | Hundred and Thirty- six Thousand, Seven Hundred and Twenty Naira, Forty-eight Kobo (N 3,513,136, 720.48), being part of | |

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| | | control system of the University lacks quality assurance. (x) Weak level of projects supervision and monitoring by the Council's Budget/Projects Monitoring and Implementation Committee. | | |
| 5.3. | TETFUND INTERVENTION PROJECTS | (i) No evidence of annual procurement plans that indicated all the forty-nine (49) projects TETFund intervention funds that applied to by way of contracts awards and payments to contractors thereof. (ii) A total of forty-nine (49) TETFund Intervention projects contracts awarded. As at the end of 2020, thirty-seven (37) projects were completed, while twelve (12) projects remained uncompleted. (iii) The total sum of the 49 projects contracts awarded was Two Billion, Eight Hundred and Eighteen Million, Seven Hundred and Seventy- | (i) The Management should have a Procurement Planning Committee for the purpose of preparing annual procurement plans that will guide TETFund in tervention for the university. (ii) There is a need for Council to commission forensic auditing of the management of TETFund Intervention Fund application to projects from inception, as the accounting and financial management of the university seems compromised. | (i) Visitor accepts recommendation (i) and directs Council to comply. (ii) Visitor accepts recommendation (ii) and directs forensic auditing with appropriate sanctions. |
| | | Nine Thousand, Seven Hundred and Six Naira only(N2,818,779,706.00). (iv) The total contract sum of the thirty-seven (37) projects that were completed is One Billion, Seven Hundred and Forty-two Million, One Hundred and | (iii) Management needs to professionalize the Procurement Unit of the University, and staff with skilled manpower. (iv) Management should set up mechanisms that ensure con- | (iii) Visitor accepts recommendation (iii) and directs Council to urgently comply. (iv) Visitor notes recommendation (iv) |

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| | | age completion levels of each of the three uncompleted TETFund projects that have remained abandoned or update of information on them. Furthermore, there is a need to re-assess the projects to establish realistic cost of completing them. (viii) The Procurement Unit and the Physical Planning Unit seem not to have been working in harmony. Procurement Unit is not properly structured or staffed with skilled man-power. | | |
| 5.4. | Financial Implication of Completing Abandoned Highly Required Projects | (i) As at 2020, the University had a total of thirteen (13) projects abandoned. (ii) The Panel assessed each of the abandoned projects, which are all NEEDS ASSESSMENT Intervention projects and found that Twelve (12) abandoned projects are highly required by the University. | (i) The NEEDS ASSESSMENT Secretariat should do a critical evaluation of the actual amount required to complete the abandoned projects and fund appropriately. (ii) In doing the above, the terms and conditions of the previous contracts should be reviewed. | (i) Visitor accepts recommendation (i) and directs NEEDS Assessment Secretariat in FME to act accordingly. (ii) Visitor notes recommendation (ii) |

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| 6.2. | STUDENTS'ENROLMENTS IN FULL TIME UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES | Total students' enrolments for Full Time (PT) undergraduate programmes, varied from the lowest enrolment of 15,353 in 2015 to the highest level of 27,776in2019, while no enrolment has been indicated for 2020 due to the Covid pandemic. | (f) Strengthen capacity of Directorate of Academic Planning to do proper academic plan acceptable to NUC. (ii) Achieve attitudinal change among staff particularly those holding critical headship positions. (iii) Ensure due process in establish- | (i) Visitor accepts recommendation (i) and directs Management to ensure compliance with NUC Guidelines. (ii) Visitor notes recommendation (ii). |
| 6.3. | ENROLMENTS IN POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES | (i) Significant decrease in the level of enrolment from 1,955 in 2016 to 1,252 in 2019. (ii) Most of the undergraduate programmes in the university have matured to the level of offering postgraduate programmes approved by NUC. Funds from Postgraduate Students' dues are meagre to address critical issues. | ing new programmes. (i) Ensure proper operation of the PG school. (ii) Take due cognizance of available academic human capital in mounting post graduate programmes. | mendation (iii). Visitor notes these recom- mendations. |

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| 7.4. | Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) | | To increase funding supports for staff development from TETFund. | Visitor notes this recommen- dation. |
| 7.5. | National Universities Commission (NUC) | | (i) Constantly liaise with NUC and get approval for new programmes. (ii) The University should stick to its Strategic Plan and Academic Brief for seamless development of new programmes. (iii) Appoint competent staff to position of Director of Academic Planning. | Visitor notes these recom- mendations. |

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| | | (vi) It was proposed that the University of Calabar Act should be reworked to have a comprehensive consolidated Act that incorporated the subsequent amendments after 2004. | | |
| | | (vii) Existence of Students' Disciplinary Committee and compliance with principle of fair hearing and natural justice. No court case challenging the University with respect to discipline of students. | | |
| | | (viii) Composition of Governing Council in conformity with the University of Calabar Act and subsequent amendment thereto. The Council met regularly and performed its functions in accordance with the University Act. | | |
| | | (ix) Harmonious working relationship among Principal Officers. (x) A number of cases in court. | | |

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| 9.3. | REGISTRY | The Registry is the ma- jor support unit that fa- cilitates teaching, re- search and community services. | (i) Urgently digitize Registry. (ii) All units of the Registry should be housed. | (i) Visitor accepts recom- mendation (i) and directs Management to ensure com- pliance. |
| | | | | (ii) Visitor notes recom- mendation (ii) for construet ion of a Regis- try Building. |
| 9.4. | Works and Maintenance Department | | (i) Provide functional store. | (i) Visitor notes recommenda- tion (i) |
| | | | (ii) Provide budget to be operated by the Director for timely routine maintenance. | (ii) Visitor notes recom- mendation (ii). |
| 9.5. | HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT (MEDICALCENTRE) | | (i) Complete the Medical Centre under construction. | (i) Visitor notes recom- mendation (i) |
| | | | (ii) Provide dedi- cated generator to the Medical Centre. | (ii) Visitor notes recom- mendation (ii). |
| | | | (iii) Provide maternity unit with at least three (3) incubators. | (iii) Visitor notes recom- mendation (iii). |
| 9.6 | STUDENT MATTERS (HALLS OF RESIDENCE) | | (i) Rehabi litate students' hostels. (ii) Complete uncompleted/abandoned students' hostels. (iii) Outsource cleaning services. | (i) Visitor accepts recommendations (i) and directs Council and Management to explore the PPP/BOT arrangement. (ii) Visitor notes recommenda- |

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| | | (xii) Police Post was not operational. (xiii) Poor illumination of the campus. | (viii) Purchase protective security materials for security personnel. (ix) Liaise with the security agencies for patrol of the Qua River. | (viii) Visitor notes recom- mendation (viii). (ix) Visitor notes recommenda- tion (ix). |

| S/No. | <u>l</u> tem | Observations/Findings by the Visitation Panel | Recommendations by the Visitation Panel | Comments by the Visitor |
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| | | | (ii) The Federal Government should come to the aid of the Management by pro- viding funds for the University to quickly fence its borders. (iii) The Manage- ment should follow up the issue with the State Government through the State Commissioner for Lands. | would be acceptable lo both parties. (ii) Visitor notes recommendation (ii). (iii) Visitor accepts recommendation (iii) and directs Council and Management to liaise with the State Government to resolve |
| 11.3. | SPECIAL MEMORANDA | TPL SIMON K. AJOM (i) On petition/ prayer of TPL. A jom, it was observed his ten- ure would have elapsed by effluxion of time by 10th January 2020. Therefore, no longer possible to reinstate him. (ii) However, peti- tioner may avail himself the opportunity pro- vided by the Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee to seek inter- nal remedy provided by the system. | (i) The petition is time-barred. (ii) The petitioner may utilize the advantage of the peace and conflict resolution committee to seek redress. | the matter. (i) Visitor notes recommendation (i). (ii) Visitor notes recommend at i on (ii). |
| | | Dr. Joseph Odok (i) With respect to alleged malicious delay in completing his Ph.D. programme, it was found that he was not | (i) The case lacked merit as he was not victimized as alleged. (ii) The petitioner may take the advan- | Visitor notes these recom- mendations. |

| S/Na | Item | Observations/Findings by the Visitation Panel | Recommendations by the Visitation Panel | Comments by the Visitor |
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| | | ately, discharge same of any wrong doing, if so found, and make whoever misappropriated or kept the money to face the law. | | |
| | | Mr. Peter Amama Agi Petitioner seeks reinstatement on wrong removal/dismissal as Bursar following the Governing Council's directive on termination of his appointment. Since his appeal to the Visitor is still pending, court struck out case as premature. However, petitioner presented letter written to him in respect of his appeal to the Visitor, directinghim to take the matter to the next/current Presidential Visitation Panel, which finds petitioner in no way victimized as due process was followed in his case. | (i) Court had already struck out the case for want of ment. (ii) Mr. Agi should therefore be advised to approach the new mechanism - the Peace and Conflict Resolution Committee - set up by the current administration. | Visitor accepts the finding that petitioner was in no way victimized fol- lowing due process. How- ever, Visitor re- jects recom- mendation that Mr. Agi should ap- proach the Peace and Conflict Reso- lution Commit- tee. |

DATED at Abuja this 20th day of December, 2022.

Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR President, Federal Republic of Nigeria