

MOOD ANALYSIS OF UNIONISTS' DISCOURSE: CASE STUDY OF NIGERIAN LABOUR CONGRESS (NLC)

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on Hallidayan Systemic Functional Linguistics, this paper examines the mood patterns of unionists' discourse in order to find out the inner force of unionists as far as the persuasion and mobilisation of workers are concerned. In other words, it aims to describe linguistic mood choices in unionists' discourse especially the case of Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) to show how unionists use language to persuade and mobilise their comrades for their legitimate rights claim. Basing on the sampling method, two excerpts have been selected from the welcome addresses by Mrs Ladi Iliya chair of the NLC's National Women's Commission and Comrade Abdulwahed Omar President of Nigeria Labour Congress, at the NLC's National Women Conference held on March 10, 2008 Kaduna, Nigeria. The results show that suitable linguistic mood choices highly strengthen unionists in their capacities of persuasion and mobilisation of their comrades.

KEYWORDS: Mood Patterns, Systemic Functional Linguistics, Unionists' Discourse

INTRODUCTION

For a long time, language and its function(s) have been studied by scholars. Linguists such as M.A.K Halliday, Suzanne Eggins, Martin J R, Roger Fowler, J D Benson to name but a very few, have proposed many approaches for the study of language and its function(s). One of these approaches is systemic functional linguistics. In this system the study of language involves three functional labels: experiential, interpersonal and textual meanings. This paper examines the mood patterns of unionists' discourse in order to find out the inner force of unionists as far as the persuasion and mobilisation of workers are concerned. In other words, it aims to describe linguistic mood choices in unionists' discourse especially the case of Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) to show how unionists use language to persuade and mobilise their comrades for their legitimate rights claim. Basing on the sampling method, two excerpts have been selected from the welcome addresses by Mrs Ladi Iliya chair of the NLC's National Women's Commission and Comrade Abdulwahed Omar President of Nigeria Labour Congress, at the NLC's National Women Conference held on March 10, 2008 Kaduna, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

The theory that underpins this research work is systemic functional linguistics. This theory views language as a social semiotic, a resource people use to accomplish their purposes by expressing meanings in contexts. In systemic functional linguistics, Mood analysis is involved in the description of interpersonal meaning. This system encodes social relationship, interaction between human being, society and culture. This leads Halliday (1971) to observe that 'through the interpersonal function the speaker is using language as the means of his own intrusion into the speech event: the expression

of his comments, his attitudes, and evaluations, and also the relationship that he sets up between himself and the listener' (p. 91). Indeed, interpersonal meaning is concerned with enabling interaction, with constructing social reality as exchanges of goods and services or information and the ways people evaluate these negotiations. It is now important to carry out the mood analysis of Texts 1 and 2 in order to find out the social relationship, interaction between participants.

Mood Analysis of Texts 1 and 2

2-1 Move Types in Texts 1 and 2

It is important to note that the mood structure of the clause enables the expression of interpersonal meanings through conversation or dialogue. The description and analysis of the mood structure of the clause help know how interactants make meanings about interpersonal dimensions such as the solidarity of their relationship; the extent of their intimacy; their level of formality with each other, their attitudes and judgments. For instance, the extent of intimacy can be expressed through the use of vocative adjuncts; the power or solidarity of people's relations can be expressed through the use of the system of modality. The mood structures of the clauses in Texts 1 and 2 are described below.

Text 1

It is important to mention that Text 1 is a discourse addressed by Mrs Ladi Iliya chair of the NLC's National Women's Commission at the NLC's National Women Conference held on March 10, 2008 Kaduna, Nigeria. The purpose here is to describe the mood structures of this discourse in order to analyse and interpret it. The move type found in Text 1 is statement.

Text 2

Text 2 is a discourse addressed by the President of Nigeria Labour Congress, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar at the opening ceremony of the 3rd NLC gender conference in Kaduna, Nigeria, 10th march, 2008. Here too, the purpose is to describe the mood structures of the discourse in order to analyse and interpret it. The move types found in Text 2 are statement and command.

2-2 Mood Types in Texts 1 and 2

Thorough clause-by-clause mood analyses of the Texts 1 and 2 are presented in appendices 1 and 2. The Table below displays the statistics of the different mood types in both Texts 1 and 2.

Table 1: Statistics of Mood Types in Texts 1 and 2

Mood Types	Text 1		Text 2	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Declarative	119	100 %	120	96%
Interrogative	00	00 %	00	00%
Imperative	00	00 %	05	04%
Total	119	100%	125	100%

It appears that there are 100 % of declarative moods in Text 1 and almost 100 % in Text 2. Interrogative moods are completely nonexistent in both Texts. Imperative moods are completely nonexistent in Text 1 but in very low proportion or almost nonexistent in Text 2. It is now important to carry out a thorough description and analysis of the different mood types in both Texts 1 and 2 so as to find out social relationship between participants (speakers and audience).

2-2-1 Declarative Mood in Text 1

As mentioned in the above table, there are 119 declarative moods representing 100 % of all mood types in Text 1. The clause-by-clause mood analysis presented in Appendix 1 includes these clauses:

Table 2: Declarative Mood in Text 1

	Adj.:conj	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Compl.: (attributive)	Adj.: circ
		MOOD		RESIDUE		
1		It		gives	me great pleasure [to welcome (F/P)] you	
19		The primary objective of the conference	is		to re-constitute the leadership of the National Women Commission of the NLC	
34		The domestic space	is	characterized	by physical abuse ...	
56	that (Aj)	poverty		has	female face	now (Ac)
113		The union	will not be		strong	
114	if (Aj)	it		stands	only on one leg by excluding women	

Exclusively through declarative moods, Mrs Ladi Iliya chair of the NLC's National Women's Commission, welcomed the distinguished guests, all other participants and clearly states the objectives of the conference as illustrated in clauses 1 and 19. More importantly, she used declarative moods to demonstrate physical abuse of women, how poverty has female face and how the union cannot be strong if it stands only on one leg excluding women. Clauses 34, 56, 113 and 114 are illustrative.

2-2-2 Declarative Mood in Text 2

As mentioned in table 1, there are 120 declarative moods representing 96 % of all mood types in Text 2. The clause-by-clause mood analysis presented in Appendix 2 includes these clauses:

Table 3: Declarative Mood in Text 2

	Adj.: circ	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Compl.: (Attributive)
		MOOD		RESIDUE	
1		I		join	the National Women Commission of the Nigeria labour Congress ...
6		A lot	has been	done	by the NLC in the area of improving women's participation ...
8	In the trade union movement (Ac),	women	are		disadvantaged
27		Women exploitation		means	human exploitation
28		abuse of women's rights		means	abuse of workers and trade union rights
47	In some unions (Ac),	women		form	a clear majority
50	Therefore (Ac),	defending the rights of women	is		critical to our representativeness and legitimacy as a workers' organisation

Through declarative moods, the President of Nigeria Labour Congress, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar, welcomed all other participants and briefly mentioned efforts done by NLC in the area of improving women's participation and women's representation in the leadership as illustrated in clauses 1 and 6. Nevertheless, he recognized that women were still disadvantaged. So defending the rights of women is essential to representativeness and legitimacy of workers' organisation since women constitute a clear majority in some unions. All these are illustrated through clauses 8, 27, 28, 47 and 50.

2-2-3 Imperative Mood in Text 2

Imperative moods are almost nonexistent in Text 2. Indeed, there are 5 imperative moods representing 4 % of all mood types.

Table 4: Imperative Mood in Text 2

N°	Adj.:conj/ voc/	Subject	Finite	Predicator	Compl.
MOOD			RESIDUE		
82				Liaise	with them
83				work	with them
84	and (Aj)			serve	as a budge
85	Comrades (Av),	let me		make	it clear to you
91				Remember	we have set a pace in electoral transparency

It appears that through imperative moods, the President of Nigeria Labour Congress, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar used imperative moods to invite workers' organisations to help women.

DISCUSSIONS

The results of the mood analyses carried out above show the mood structures of the selected discourses. They indicate that the speaker, Mrs Ladi Iliya has exclusively used declarative moods to persuade the audience about physical abuse of women, female face poverty and how the union cannot be strong if it stands only on one leg excluding women. The absence of interrogative mood in her discourse indicates that she is not in quest of information. She really knows women's situation because she is herself a woman and experiences those problems with them in one way or another. The absence of imperative mood shows that though she is the Chairperson of the National Women Commission, she does not express authority over women, she is humble and she eliminates any distance that should normally exist between a leader and militants so as to keep a closer relationship with them. In Text 2, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar has used 96 % of declarative moods to persuade the audience about the importance of women's rights defence viewed as critical to the representativeness and legitimacy of workers' organisations due to their status of workers and the clear majority that they constitute. Similarly to Mrs Ladi's discourse, the absence of interrogative mood indicates that he is not in quest of information. He really masters women's situation because it is not new to him. The imperative moods are in very low proportion. Nevertheless, their presence indicates power. As president of Nigeria Labour Congress, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar expresses authority over his militants. It can be inferred from this discussion that suitable mood choices enable unionists to have a high capacity of persuasion and mobilisation of workers. Furthermore, they treat each other as comrades. The use of this vocative adjunct helps eliminate social distance between leaders and militants. Thus, unionists have the opportunities to convince and mobilize workers for specific purposes.

CONCLUSIONS

Many attempts have been made to describe and analyse the mood structures of unionists' discourse. With regards to all that has been developed thus far, unionists predominantly use declarative moods to persuade their comrades. The absence of interrogative mood in the selected discourses indicates that the speakers are not in quest of information. This shows to what extent they master women's situation. The presence of imperative mood indicates power. As president of Nigeria Labour Congress, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar expresses authority over his militants. It has been found out that suitable mood choices enable unionists to have a high capacity of persuasion and mobilisation of workers. Furthermore, they treat each other as comrades. The use of this vocative adjunct helps eliminate social distance between leaders and militants. Thus, unionists have the opportunities to convince and mobilize workers for specific purposes.

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ANALYSED APPENDICES

Mood Analyses

Keys:

S=Subject, F=Finite, Fn=negative, Fms=modalised, Fml=modulated P=Predicator, Pml=modulated predicator, Pms=modalised predicator, F/P=fused Finite and Predicator, C=Complement, Ca=attribute complement A=Adjunct, Ac=circumstantial, Am=mood, Ao=comment, Ap=polarity, Av=vocative, Aj=conjunctive, At=continuity Wh=wh element, Wh/S, Wh/C

Mood Analysis of Text 1

Text 1

Excerpts from the address of the Chairperson of the National Women Commission

WELCOME ADDRESS BY MRS LADI ILIYA CHAIR OF THE NLC'S NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMISSION AT THE NLC'S NATIONAL WOMEN CONFERENCE HELD ON MARCH 10, 2008 KADUNA, NIGERIA

1-It (S) gives (F/P) me great pleasure [to welcome (F/P)] you (C) to this edition of the National Women's Conference of the Nigeria Labour Congress (Ac). 2-Your presence (S) here (Ac) demonstrates (F/P) to us (C) 3-that (Aj) Nigerian women workers (S) have (F/P) real friends and partners (C). 4-In particular (Ac), we (S) are (F) delighted by the presence of His Excellency the Governor of Kaduna State (C). 5-Architect Namadi Sambo (Av), Governor Sambo (S) who (Aj) has (F) extended (P) to us tremendous goodwill and support (C), 6-which (Wh/S) has (F) made (P) this conference a reality (C). 7-On behalf of the National women's Commission (Ac), we (S) thank (F/P) His Excellency most sincerely (C) // and (Aj) look forward to (F/P) your solidarity (C) in the future (Ac). 8-We (S) welcome (F/P) in a special way (Ac) our comrade, friend and leader, Comrade Abdulwahed Ibrahim Omar, President of the NLC (C). 9-We (S) value (F/P) the NLC President (C) 10-especially (Ac) for the great confidence (C) he (S) has (F/P) in our capabilities as women and for his solidarity and partnership (C). 11-We (S) appreciate (F/P) the presence of other distinguished guests // who (Wh/S) have (F) come (P) from far and near (C); 12-I (S) welcome (F/P) our international guests, my colleagues in the national Administrative Council of the NLC, leaders of industrial unions and Kaduna State Council of the NLC (C). 13-I (S) welcome (F/P) // and (Aj) salute (F/P) my sister, friends and comrades // who (Wh/S) are (F) delegates and observers to this conference (C). 14-The theme of this conference (S) is (F) 'Expanding Women's Participation in the Leadership of the Trade Union Movement' (C) 15-Participants (S) have been (F) drawn (P) from the membership of the NLC's National Women Commission (C). 16-Also (Aj) participating (S) are (F) female national office-bearers, gender officers and members of women commissions of the 36 affiliates (C). 17-The 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (S) are (F) represented (F/P) by the women committees of the NLC (C). 18-Observers (S) have been (F) drawn (P) from the national leadership of the NLC, some federations from other countries, and our development cooperation partners (C).

19-The primary objective of the conference (S) is (F) to re-constitute the leadership of the National Women Commission of the NLC (C). 20-The Women Commission (S) is (F) the core institutional mechanism developed by the NLC to give women greater leverage in the mainstream of the Congress (C). 21-Through the Commission (Ac), women (S) have (F/P) opportunities of representation at policy and decision-making organs of the NLC at both national and state levels (C). 22-The Commission (S) ensures (F/P) 23-that (Aj) the NLC (S) gives (F/P) greater attention to the rights of women in the workplace and in the larger economic and political sphere (C). 24-The Commission (S) is (F) the coordinating centre for other activities aimed at attaining the gender equity objectives of the NLC (C). 25-These activities (S) are (F) diverse // and (Aj) cover (F/P) the 36 affiliates and 36 state councils of the NLC and the Federal Capital Territory (C). 26-This conference (S) will (Fml) review (P) the performance of the commission in the overall context of the gender equity activities of the NLC (C). 27-We (S) will (Fml) also (Aj) be (F) deliberating (F/P) on a wide range of women-specific issues and concerns // that (Aj) will (Fml) form (F/P) the agenda of the Commission and the NLC in the future (C). 28-Already (Aj), there (S) are (F) proposals and draft resolutions // that (Aj) will (Fml) enable (F/P) conference delegates [identify(F/P) ways that the NLC and the Women Commission can improve the status, welfare and rights of women within the trade union movement] (C). 29-In general (Ac), we (S) will be (Fml) examining (F/P) the women's empowerment agenda in relation to the larger Nigerian policy, economy and society (C) 30-while (Aj) we (S) hope (F/P) [to discuss (F/P)] in greater details (Ac) the role (C) 31-that (Aj) the Labour Movement (S) can (Fml) play (F/P) in advancing the rights of women and the girl-child (C).

32-Your Excellency, Comrades and delegates (Av), the conditions of women and the girl-child (S) are (F) still terrible (Ca) globally, regionally and nationally (Ac). 33-In the domestic sphere (Ac), women and the girl-child (S) have (F/P) a subordinate status (C). 34-The domestic space (S) is (F) on the average (Ac) characterized (P) by physical abuse

of women denial of educational and other opportunities and inability to pursue economically productive career (C). 35- Particularly in developing countries (Ac), **there (S) are (F)** severe deficits in social provisioning for the specific needs of women (C). 36-**This (S) is (F)** easily (Ac) **seen (P)** in poor health indicators, especially those related to maternal health (C). 37-According to the 2006 World Health Statistics released by the World Health Organisation (Ac), **800 women (S) die (F/P)** per 100,000 live births (C). 38-**59,000 women (S) died (F/P)** from birth-related complications (C) in Nigeria in 2005 (Ac). 39-**What this (S) means (F/P) is (F)** 40-that (Aj) **the act of bringing forth a child (S)** potentially (Ac) **carries (F/P)** a death sentence for a majority of our women (C). 41-**There (S) are (F)** other degrading, disempowering and potentially fatal conditions, such as harmful widowhood rites, lack of access to ordinarily legitimate inheritance trafficking and forced marriage (C). 42-In the economic sphere (Ac), **women (S) earn (F/P)** less in real terms and relative to the diverse responsibilities and needs // that (Aj) **are (F) associated (P)** with their domestic roles (C). 43-Globally and especially in Africa (Ac), **women (S) are** generally (Ac) confined to marginal, tedious but low-income activities largely concentrated in the agrarian and urban informal sector (C), 44-where (Ac) **they (S) are (F)** prone to abuses and exploitation (C). 45-In formal employment (Ac), **women (S) suffer (F/P)** serious disadvantages, including growing sexual harassment (C). 46-**The occupations and professions in which women [predominate (F/P)] (S)** usually (Ac) **attract (F/P)** lower value and emoluments relative to those where men are in the predominance (C). 47-The evidence (C) that (Aj) **we (S) see (F/P) is (F)** 48-that (Aj) in the workplace (Ac), **the standard of professional evaluation and other parameters of upward mobility (S) are (F) skewed (P)** against women (C). 49-**This (S) is (F)** because (Aj) [**women's time in the workplace (S) is (F)** usually (Ac) **interrupted (P)** by childbirth and family-care (C)], 50-**which (Wh/S) deny (F/P)** opportunities for advancement and promotion 51-that (Aj) they (S) **may have (Fml)** otherwise (Ac) **attained (P)** 52-if (Aj) **they (S) choose (F/P) [to stay (F/P)]** in the work force.

53-**The implication of all these (S) is (F)** 54-that (Aj) **women (S) are (F) getting (P)** poorer and poorer (Ca). 55-**This (S) explains (F/P)** the international consensus among leaders, scholars, activists and development cooperation practitioners 56-that (Aj) **poverty (S) now (Ac) has (F/P)** female face (C). 57-**The feminisation of poverty (S) is (F)** an indictment of the structures of the production and distribution of resources nationally, regionally and internationally (C). 58-In addition (Ac), Comrades (Av), **there (S) are (F)** fewer women in public and corporate governance at all levels(C). 59-What (C) **this (S) means** is that women lack powers for effective policy-making and resource-allocation (C). 60-**The public space (S) is (F)** largely (Ac) **monopolised (P)** by men (C) 61-and (Aj) **the truth (S) is (F)** // that are not in a hurry to share such powers or utilize for the benefit of women (C). 62-Worse still (Ac), **the disadvantages of women are (F)** also (Ac) **reproduced (P)** in social movements, including regrettably, the trade union movement (C). 63-At the level of NLC (Ac), **we (S) can (Fml) confirm (P)** that the conditions for women's upward mobility have become more qualitatively conducive (C). 64-NLC (S) **has (F) taken (P)** many fundamental steps in furtherance of gender equity (C) 65-although (Aj) **this (S) is (F)** sometimes (Ac) due to sustain pressure by women (C). 66-Today (Ac), **women (S) now (Ac) have (F/P)** the automatic membership of the National Administrative Council of the NLC through a constructive use of quotas.67-**The NLC (S) has (F)** also (Ac) **institutionalised (P)** the principle of affirmative action, // [to ensure (F/P)] enhanced women's participation in the governance and activities of the Congress. (C) 68-**This (S) has (F) helped (P) [to create (F/P)]** opportunities for women to benefit from local and international training and exposure that were hitherto almost exclusively reserved for the men (C). 69-**The partnership between NLC affiliates and state councils (S) has (F) helped (F/P) [to secure (F/P)]** improvement in other areas (C). 70-In the affiliates and state councils (Ac), **women (S) are (F)** now (Ac) more visible in the mainstream (C) // and (Aj) **occupy (F/P)** top leadership positions that would have been

inconceivable some years ago (C).

71-**Many of the affiliates (S)** now (Ac) **have (F/P)** women's committees and gender desk officers (C) 72-while (Aj) **the women committees in the state councils (S) are (F)** generally (Ac) **empowering (F/P)** women to be part of the mainstream of labour activities in the states (C). 73-But (Aj) **we (S) can (Fml)** and most (Aj) **do (P)** even more (C). 74-In the NLC (Ac), **we (S) have (F/P)** the challenge of putting women issues on the mainstream in a more consistent and vigorous way (C). 75-**We (S) need (F/P)** a more equitable distribution of leadership responsibilities among men and women both at the level of elected officers and the technocracy of the NLC and affiliates (C). 76-**One vital challenge facing us (S) is (F)** the funding of the NLC's National Women Commission (C). 77-From experience (Ac), **non-financing of institutional mechanism designed to advance the rights of women (S) constitutes (F/P)** another level of disempowerment (C). 78-**This (S) is (F)** why the theme of the 2008 International Women's Day is about financing avenues for women empowerment (C) // and (Aj) **ensuring (F/P)** that intervention programmes are properly reserved (C). 79-As NLC (Ac), **we (S) need (F/P) [to put (F/P)]** our money where we have invested our commitments (C). 80-**We (S)** again (Ac) **urge (F/P)** the NLC's leadership to properly finance the Women's Commission (C), 81-so that (Aj) **it (S) can (Fml) meet (P)** its responsibilities as a specialised agency of the NLC (C).

82-Secondly (Ac), **some affiliates (S) have not (Fn) taken (P)** the required steps to implement the NLC's gender equity policy (C), 83-while (Aj) in the states (Ac), **the women committees (S) are not (Fn) accorded (P)** the required recognition and right to fully participate in the mainstream (C). 84-Above all (Ac), **we (S) need (F/P) [to remind (F/P)]** the NLC that the 30% quota for women in the organs and activities of the NLC governance is an interim measure (C). 85-**The time (S) is (F)** ripe for the NLC to take decisive steps for a 50-50 ratio (C) // and (Aj) to fully (Ac) **[institutionalise (F/P)]** the principle of equality of opportunities (C).

86-Your Excellency, brothers and sisters (Av), **we (S) wish (F/P) [to use (F/P)]** this opportunity to call on Nigeria's political elites and leaders to adopt a more progressive approach to the rights and concerns of women (C). 87-Although (Aj) **there (S) have been (F/P)** improvements in the number of women in executive positions, especially at federal level (C), 88-**Nigeria (S)** still (Ac) **falls (F/P)** short of global, even African standards (C). 89-**The terribly unimpressive representation of women on the Federal Executive Council, the National Assembly and higher levels of the judiciary (S) cannot be (Fn) justified (P)** any longer (C). 90-**Nigeria has (F)** honest, qualified and visionary women (C), // who (Aj) **can (Fml) provide (P)** quality leadership and service in any capacity (C). 91-**Nigeria (S) must be (Fml) purged (F/P)** of the patriarchal despotism // that (Aj) **has (F) denied (P)** her the services of many qualified women (C). 92-However (Ac), **we (S) salute (F/P)** the courage and vision of Nigerian women (C) // who (Aj) **have (F) made (P)** incursions into politics and governance (C). 93-**The challenge (S) is (F)** for such women to appreciate (C) 94-that (Aj) **they (S) represent (F/P)** the entire Nigerian women (C). 95-**They (S) have to demonstrate (F/P)** that women are competent (C) 96-and that (Aj) **any Nigerian institution (S) is (F)** in capable hands (C) 97-**when (Aj) women (S) are (F)** in charge (C). 98-**Such women (S) owes (F/P)** us a duty to stand up and defend the rights of women by taking up real issues as maternal mortality, women's employment, rights of the girl-child, full sexual reproductive health rights, violence against women, maternity rights and women trafficking (C). 99-**Our sisters in high places (S) should not (Fml) concentrate (F/P)** on mundane issues such as how women dress (C). 100-**We (S) are (F) concerned (P)** about the growing incidence of rape, including marital rape, and other forms of violence against women (C). 101-**Labour (S) is (F) impressed (P)** about recent discussions around sexual harassment and violence against women in the National Assembly

(C). 102-**We (S) believe (F/P)** 103-that (Aj) **Nigeria (S) is (F)** overdue for protective legislation regarding women's rights (C). 104-**We (S) need (F/P)** strict laws against sexual harassment and violence against women (C). 105-**The National Women's Commission (S) will (Fml) collaborate (P)** with other women's empowerment groups to lobby the National Assembly to make the necessary enactments (C).

106-Your Excellency, brothers and sisters (Av), **we (S) are not (Fn)** in competition with men (C), 107-nor (Aj) **do (F) we (S) seek (P)** to rally women behind a dogma (C), in antagonism of the men (Ac). 108-**I (S) stand (F/P)** here again (Ac) [**to preach (F/P)** the ideals of partnership, solidarity and mutual support (C)]. 109-**We (S) believe (F/P)** 110-that (Aj) **the trade union movement (S) makes (F/P)** us strong (C). 111-However (Ac), **the union (S) can (Fml) make (F/P)** us stronger (C) 112-only if (Aj) **it (S) addresses (F/P)** the full diversity of the interests of all its components, male and female (C). 113-**The union (S) will not be (Fn)** strong (Ca) 114-if (Aj) **it (S) stands (F/P)** only on one leg by excluding women (C). 115-**The union (S) will be (Fml)** strong (Ca) 116-only if (Aj) **it (S) is (F) rooted (F/P)** in the contributions and abilities of all comrades working together as brothers and sisters (C). 117-Therefore (Ac), **partnership and solidarity (S) are (F)** important in our march towards empowerment as a movement (C); 118-**partnership and solidarity (S) will (Fml) enable (F/P)** the movement to do justice to the welfare and interests of all us, men and women. 119-**We (S) reaffirm (F/P)** our unflinching commitment to the vision and goals of the Nigeria Labour Congress and pledge our partnership and solidarity with its leadership and constituents (C).

Text 2

Excerpts from the address of the President of Nigeria Labour Congress, Comrade Abdulwahed Omar

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF NIGERIA LABOUR CONGRESS, COMRADE ABDULWAHED OMAR AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 3RD NLC GENDER CONFERENCE IN KADUNA, NIGERIA, 10TH MARCH, 2008

1-**I (S) join (F/P)** the National Women Commission of the Nigeria labour Congress to welcome you to the 3rd General Conference (C). 2-For me (Ac) **this conference (S) is (F)** memorable (Ca) 3-because (Aj) **it (S) is (F)** my first time of addressing it as President of the NLC (C). 4-However (Ac), before now (Ac) **I (S) have (F) followed (F/P)** the progress of the Women's Commission (C) 5-and (Aj) **I (S) have (F) diligently (Ac) taken (F/P)** interests in the measures taken by the NLC to address gender equity (C). 6-**A lot (S) has been (F) done (F/P)** by the NLC in the area of improving women's participation and women's representation in the leadership (C). 7-However (Ac), **things (S) are (F)** still quite (Ac) bad (Ca). 8-In the trade union movement (Ac), **women (S) are (F)** still largely (Ac) disadvantaged (Ca) 9-while (Aj) **gender issues (S) are not (Fn)** yet (Ac) **given (F/P)** the maximum possible prominence (C). 10-Indeed (Ac), even in sectors that employ more women than men (Ac), **the structures of the unions (S) are (F)** still largely (Ac) male-dominated (Ca). 11-**We (S) in NLC (Ac) believe (F/P)** 12-that (Aj) **the starting point in ensuring gender equity (S) is (F)** to purge ourselves of male chauvinism (C). 13-**We (S) believe (F/P)** 14-that (Aj) **union (S) needs (F/P) [to eliminate (F/P)** the attitudinal and institutional practices (C) // that (Aj) **reduce (F/P)** women to second-class members (C). 15-On other words (Ac), **gender equity like charity must (Fml) begin (F/P)** right here in the movement (Ac). 16-**This (S) is (F)** why (C) 17-**we (S) in the NLC (Ac) have (F) accorded (F/P)** constitutional legitimacy to the gender equity imperative (C). 18-**The idea (S) is (F) to ensure (F/P)** 19-that (Aj) **women (S) participate (F/P)** actively in all decision-making organs of the NLC and the affiliates (C).

20-Today (Ac), for the first time in the 30 years history of the NLC (Ac), **there (S) are (F)** three women in the National Administrative Council, one of them a Vice President (C). 21-By our rules (Ac), **this (S) is (F)** the minimum (C) 22-and (Aj) **I (S) am (F) convinced (F/P)** 23-that (Aj) in the next dispensation (Ac), **we (S) would (Fml) have (F/P)** more women (C). 24-With the theme chosen for this conference (Ac), **I (S) am (F) sure (Ca)** 25-that (Aj) **there (S) will be (Fml)** serious reflections (C) 26-about how (Ac) **we (S) can (Fml) have (F/P)** more women in the leadership of the NLC and affiliates (C). 27-**Women exploitation (S) means (F/P)** human exploitation (C); 28-**abuse of women's rights (S) means (F/P)** abuse of workers and trade union rights (C). 29-Therefore (Ac), **our approach as Organised Labour (S) is (F) [to address (F/P)]** the conditions of women as a primary agenda of our movement (C) // and (Aj) not leave (F/P) the struggle to the women alone (C). 30-**We (S) believe (F/P)** 31-that (Aj) **our movement (S) has (F/P)** a strategic role to play in the struggle against the exploitation, marginalization and abuse of women (C). 32-**The first challenge (S) is (F) to ensure (F/P)** 33-that (Aj) **we (S) use (F/P)** our structures in the workplace to wage this struggle (C) // and (Aj) **ensure (F/P)** 34-that (Aj) **women (S) are (F) treated (P)** equitably, decently and specially (C). 35-**I (S) believe (F/P)** again (Ac) 36-that (Aj) **women (S) must be (Fml) treated (F/P)** specially 37-if (Aj) **they (S) must (Fml) catch up (F/P)** with men in terms of upward mobility (C). 38-If (Aj) **we (S) must (Fml) break (F/P)** the proverbial glass ceiling (C), 39-**we (S) must (Fml) pull down (F/P)** all the attitudinal and structural de-motivators and obstacles against women's advancement (C).

40-Beyond that (Ac), **we (S) must (Fml) take (F/P)** steps [to ensure (F/P)] (C) 41-that (Aj) **the family responsibilities of women (S) are (F) factored (P)** into the decision-making process at the workplace (C). 42-In other words (Ac), **we (S) cannot (Fml) treat (F/P)** male and female workers the same way (C). 43-**Women (S) have (F/P)** far more responsibilities in the family than men (C) 44-and (Aj) **we (S) must (Fml) ensure (F/P)** 45-that (Aj) **women (S) are able to (Fml) conveniently (Ac) discharge (P)** these responsibilities in a way (C) that (Aj) does not (Fn) set (P) them back professionally (C). 46-**Women workers (S) deserve (F/P)** the protection of their unions and of the NLC (C). 47-In some unions (Ac), **women (S) form (F/P)** a clear majority (C). 48-And so (Aj), if (Aj) **we (S) fail (F/P)** as unions to protect the rights of women (C), 49-**we (S) can (Fml) no longer (Ac) consider (F/P)** ourselves as relevant to the aspirations of the entirety of our membership (C). 50-Therefore (Ac), **defending the rights of women (S) is (F)** critical to our representativeness and legitimacy as a workers' organisation (C). 51-Yet (Ac), **the evidence on the ground (S) suggests (F/P)** the need for us to do more, especially in the workplace (C). 52-**We (S) need (F/P) [to re-tool (F/P)]** our movement to address concerns of women (C), // which (Aj) are (F) also (Ac) concerns of society (C). 53-**These (S) include (F/P):**

- Sexual harassment (C)
- Violence against women (C)
- Unfavourable recruitment practices (C)
- Discrimination (C)
- Lack of paid maternity leave (C)
- Women trafficking (C)
- The virtual reduction of our sisters and daughters to prostitutes by banks (C)
- Prolonged working hours that affect the role of women as family care-givers (C)
- Absence of daycare centres and crèches in workplaces and other forms of discrimination and abuses. (C)

54-As a workers' organisation (Ac), **we (S)** also **(Ac) must (Fml) remain (F/P)** relevant in the wider struggle for the economic, social and political empowerment of women (C). 55-**This (S) is (F)** why (C) 56-**the NLC (S) supports (F/P)** current legislative initiatives on sexual harassment and violence against women (C). 57-**We (S) will (Fml) do (F/P)** more **[to combat (F/P)]** gender inequality and the discrimination of women face at home, at work, in the economy and in governance (C). 58-**We (S) will (Fml) partner (F/P)** with government, development cooperation partners and social movements towards the empowerment and defence of women and the girl-child (C). 59-**The leadership of the NLC (S) will (Fml) continue (F/P)** [to strengthen (F/P)] the National Women Commission of Congress (C) 60-because (Aj) **we (S) recognize (F/P)** the value of its work (C); 61-**we (S) are (F) impressed (P)** by the accomplishments of the Women's Commission over the years (C), 62-and (Aj) **we (S) are (F) committed (P) [to partnering (F/P)]** with it in a context of generating internal synergy (C). 63-**We (S) have (F) started (F/P) [to reap (F/P)]** the dividends of gender mainstreaming with the election of a female President by NASU (C). 64-**This (S) represents (F/P)** an outstanding progress (C) 65-that (Aj) **we (S) have not (Fn) witnessed (F/P)** in the recent past (Ac). 66-Comrades (Av), **I (S) must (Fml) say (P)** here (Ac) 67-that (Aj) **we (S) have not (Fn) fared (P)** badly (Ac). 68-So far (Ac), over these years (Ac) **we (S) have (F) seen (P)** more women visibility in Trade Union activities (C).69- In many of our affiliates (Ac) **women (S) have (F) taken (P)** more sensitive positions including apex positions (C). 70-Today (Ac) **one of the biggest organized union in Nigeria – NASU (S) is (F) headed (P)** by a woman (C). 71-**The now famous “Etteh-must-go” protest of NLC (S) was (F)** effectively (Ac) **led (P)** by a female Vice President of Congress (C). 72-**We (S) are (F) moving forward (P)**. 73-But (Aj) **we (S) have (F/P)** a lot more to do (C). 74-**I (S) commend (F/P)** the Gender Unit of Congress for a good job (C), so far (Ac). 75-Despite your constraints (Ac), **your performance (S) is (F)** highly (Ac) commendable (Ca). 76-But (Aj) **I (S) must (Fml) challenge (P)** you to do a lot more (C). 77-**It (S) is (F)** only by intensifying your advocacy (C) 78-that (Aj) **you (S) will (Fml) optimize (P)** your success (C). 79-**I (S) charge (F/P)** you to move out (C) // and (Aj) **work (F/P)** close with affiliate unions (C). 80-**This (S) is (F)** 81-where (Aj) **the bulk of the work (S) lies (F/P)**. 82-**Liaise (F/P)** with them (C), 83-**work (F/P)** with them 84-and (Aj) **serve (F/P)** as a budge. 85-Comrades (Av), **let me (S) make (F/P)** it clear to you (C) 86-that (Aj) **this conference (S) is not (Fn)** a mere jamboree or just a platform for election (C). 87-**You (S) will (Fml) discuss (P)** on the future of women in Labour Movement (C). 88-**You (S) will (Fml) plan (P)** strategies for effective women participation in trade union activities (C). 89-**As part of the agenda of this conference (S) is (F)** the election of a new executive committee for the women commission (C), 90-**I (S) urge (F/P)** you to maintain the Congress tradition of coming out even stronger after all the rigours of elections (C). 91-**Remember (F/P)** we have set a pace in electoral transparency (C). 92-**You (S) must (Fml) maintain (F/P)** it (C).

93-On our part (Ac), **we (S) pledge (F/P)** to you our maximum cooperation, assistance collaboration (C). 94-**I (S) am (F) [to inform (F/P)]** you (C) 95-that (Aj) **Congress (S) has (F) resolved (P) [to look into (F/P)]** any observations, proposals and recommendations 96-**you (S) may (Fml) come up with (F/P)** arising from this conference (C). 97-**I (S) assure (F/P)** you (C) 98-**we (S) will (Fml) do (P)** that with dispatch (C). 99-**We (S) should (Fml) hope (F/P) 100-this conference (S) will (Fml) deliberate (P)** on other issues in the polity (C), 101-some of which (C) **we (S) have (F)** already (Ac) **shared (P)** with the leadership of the women's commission (C). 102-**One major issue (S) is (F)** the need to put more pressure on all arms of governments over the anti-corruption agenda (C). 103-**There (S) have been (F)** setbacks in the war against corruption in the recent past (C). 104-**One of these (S) is (F)** the ruling of the Court of Appeal (C), // which (Aj) **granted (F/P)** an injunction in perpetuity against the investigation, arrest or prosecution of the former Governor of Rivers State, Dr Peter Odili (C). 105-**This (S) is (F)** obviously (Ac) **restoring (P)** immunity to the ex-governor even after his

tenure // and (Aj) **is (F)** clearly an abuse of the prerogative of the court (C).

106-**Another issue of concern to us (S) is (F)** the non-reinstatement of the 49 University of Ilorin lecturers (C). 107-**It (S) is (F)** important to recall (C) 108-that (Aj) **President Umaru Musa Yar' Adua (S) had (F)** earlier (Ac) **given (P)** his assurances to the leadership of ASUU based on which a general strike was suspended by the union (C). 109-**It (S) does (F/P)** no good to the credibility of this government 110-that (Aj) **an assurance and undertaking personally given by the President (S) is allowed to (Fml) come (P)** to nothing (C). 111-**The NLC (S) believes (F/P)** 112-that (Aj) **ASUU (S) has (F) exhausted (P)** all existing avenues of dialogue on this matter // and (Aj) should not be (Fml) **blamed (P)** by anybody (C). 113-**We (S) call on (F/P)** Mr President to intervene again [**to ensure (F/P)**] (C) 114-that (Aj) **his assurance to ASUU (S) is (F) backed up (P)** by the proper steps to reinstate the lecturers (C). 115-To our National and International Development Cooperate partners (C), **I (S) wish (F/P)** to sincerely (Ac) say (F/P) 116-**you (S) are (F)** wonderful in your support to us (Ca). 117-**I (S) am (F)** happy seeing your faces full of enthusiasm for participation (Ca).

118-Finally (Ac), **I (S) wish (F/P) [to express(F/P)]** our appreciation to His Excellency, the Governor of Kaduna State, Architect Namadi Sambo, and the Government and people of Kaduna State for their support towards this conference (C). 119-**We (S) also (Ac) thank (F/P)** our other partners (C), // who (Aj) **have (F) availed (P)** us goodwill and technical input into this programme (C). 120-**We (S) are (F)** grateful to the Kaduna State Council of the NLC for the logistic backup (Ca). 121-To my sisters (C), **we (S) offer (F/P)** our solidarity, best wishes and our hope (C) 122-that (Aj) **this conference (S) will (Fml) make (F/P)** the NLC stronger and more focused on its gender equity (C). 123-**I (S) urge (F/P)** you to give sustained attention to the concerns of our movement and of the Commission (C).

124-**I (S) wish (F/P)** you fruitful deliberation // and (Aj) **thank (F/P)** you all for your presence and attention (C).

125-**It (S) shall be (Fml)** well with you all (C).

Long Life National Women's Commission (C)

Long Life Nigeria labour Congress (C)

Long Life Federal Republic of Nigeria (C)