Centre for Social Justice

Centre for Social Justice Occasional Newsletter, July 2026

In this Edition, CSJ raised issues with the waiver in 2025, of over N34trillion in customs revenue by the Minister of Finance against the background of only N28trillion consolidated revenue of the Federal Government of Nigeria. In a letter to the principal officers of the National Assembly, CSJ asked NASS to consider overriding the President's veto of the Federal Audit Service Bill. CSJ collaborated with Sister Organisations in the Economic and Fiscal Justice Coalition to engage the Coordinating Minister for the Economy on pathways for economic reform and development.

2025 FGN Revenue: Only N28.23trillion Accrued While FGN Waived N34trillion Customs Duties

Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), a Nigerian Knowledge Institution, recalls with regret the recent revelation by the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS), while appearing before the House of Representatives Committee on Finance that it implemented the waiver of N34trillion worth of customs duties in the 2025 financial year. NCS stated that in accordance with enabling laws, they do not approve waivers but implement same on the authority of the Minister of Finance.

The House of Representative Committee on Finance requested a comprehensive breakdown of the beneficiaries, the legal basis and purpose of the waivers.

It is imperative to note that customs duty waiver is a subset of tax expenditure and other tax expenditures include all types of tax holidays and exemptions granted to various companies especially, to attract foreign investment in critical sectors. A proper account of the overall tax expenditure for 2025 will definitely be in excess of the customs duty waiver figures.

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Appeal for Legislative Intervention in Assent to the Federal Audit Service Bill

The President
Senate of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
National Assembly Complex, Abuja

Distinguished Senator Godswill Akpabio, .

Presidential Assent to the Federal Audit Service Bill

We are writing in respect of the Federal Audit Service Bill (Bill) passed by the National Assembly and sent to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu for assent. We acknowledge the great work done by the National Assembly in the passage of the Bill. The Bill introduces institutional independence, expands audit scope, strengthens enforcement powers, and aligns Nigeria’s audit framework with international standards. Its assent is critical to improving fiscal discipline, reducing corruption, and enhancing public sector performance.

Our concern is that months after the Bill was sent for presidential assent, the President has not given assent and it is not in the public domain that he sent a letter to the National Assembly stating his reasons for declining assent to the Bill.

We request that the leadership of the National Assembly engage the President to find out the reasons for denial of assent and if possible, rectify any errors or critical challenges with a view to presidential assent. In the alternative, if the National Assembly is convinced that the Bill as passed is the best for Nigeria, it should override assent and pass the bill again by two thirds majority, in accordance with the dictates of section 58 (5) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended.

As a group of patriotic citizens, we are concerned about the denial of presidential assent for the following reasons.

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Report of Meeting with the Coordinating Minister of the Economy

The Economic and Fiscal Justice Coalition (EFJC) represented by Eze Onyekpere of Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Celestine Odo of ActionAid Nigeria (AAN), Olusegun Elemo of Paradigm Leadership Support Initiative (PLSI) and John Onyeukwu of Statecraft met with the Minister of Finance and Coordinating Minister for the Economy ably represented by Muhammad Sanusi Danjuma, the Permanent Secretary, Special Duties, Ministry of Finance. The meeting which held in the afternoon of July 8 th 2026 focused on critical issues of concern to the economy and the central theme was building an economy that works for everyone.

The key issues discussed was the need for presidential assent to the Federal Audit Services Bill; Poverty Reduction Must Become the Primary Measure of Economic Success; Fiscal Stability Must Create Fiscal Space for Social Investment; Nigeria’s Debt Profile Requires Greater Prudence; Domestic Resource Mobilisation Should Precede Additional Borrowing; Accountability and Transparency Must

Accompany Revenue Growth; The Cost of Governance Must Be Reduced; Economic Growth Must Create Jobs, Not Just Wealth; Agriculture Must Become Nigeria's Most Powerful Anti-Poverty Strategy; Social Protection Is an Economic Investment; Good Governance Is Sound Economic Policy; Citizens Must Become Partners in Economic Reform; Needed- A Framework for Measuring Success.

Our presentation concluded by reminding the Honourable Minister that Nigeria stands at a defining moment. The difficult reforms already undertaken have created an opportunity to build a more resilient economy. The next challenge is to ensure that macroeconomic stability evolves into inclusive prosperity.

History will not judge this reform era solely by improvements in revenue collection, exchange rate stability, or fiscal balances. It will judge it by whether more Nigerians escaped poverty, whether businesses expanded, whether young people found meaningful work, whether farmers became more productive, whether women were economically empowered, whether children remained in school, and whether every Nigerian could see tangible evidence that economic reform improved everyday life.

The Economy Justice Coalition therefore urged government to pursue a new social compact built on six mutually reinforcing principles.

CSJ hereby reminds the BOF and the respective Ministers of the provisions of section 48 (1) of the Fiscal Responsibility Act:

1. Facilitate presidential assent to the Federal Audit Service Bill and a new federal audit regime.

2. Fiscal Responsibility anchored on transparency, prudent borrowing, and efficient public expenditure.

3. Inclusive Economic Growth that creates jobs, supports enterprise, and reduces inequality.

4. Human Capital Development through sustained investment in education, healthcare, nutrition, and social protection.

5. Accountable Governance that combats corruption, strengthens institutions, and restores public trust.

6. Citizen Partnership that recognises civil society, the private sector, labour, and communities as indispensable partners in national development.

The Coalition stands ready to work constructively with the Coordinating Minister of the Economy, Ministry of Finance and other arms of government to advance policies that strengthen fiscal sustainability while ensuring that economic progress is measured not only by the strength of our balance sheets but by the dignity, opportunity, and wellbeing of every Nigerian. It is trite knowledge that the true wealth of a nation is measured not by what it keeps in its treasury, but by what it invests in its people.

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