

President Yar'Adua Names NEITI Board

President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua on 22 January 2008 reconstituted the National Stakeholders' Working Group, which is the governing board of the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI). The 15-member board will be headed by Professor Assisi Asobie, according to a press release from the Presidency.

Asobie, a retired university don, was part of the pioneer NSWG and is one of the four re-appointed members. He is a renowned transparency campaigner and member of the board of the global Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

Other members of the NSWG are: Mr. Basil Omiyi (Vice Chairman, Shell), Comrade Shehu Sani, Mr. Peter Esele (President, PENGASSAN), Engr. Abubakar Lawal Yar'Adua (GMD, NNPC), Alhaji Jafaru Aliyu Paki and Dr. M.I. Yahaya.

The rest are: Alhaji Aliko Mohammed, Mr. Leke Alder, Mr. T.K. Ogoriba (President, Ijaw World Congress), Mazi Sam Ohuabunwa (President, NESG), Alhaji Ibrahim Dankwambo (Accountant-General of the Federation), Ms. Ifueko Omogui (Chairperson, Federal Inland Revenue Service), Mallam Haruna Yunusa Sa'eed and Mallam Mahmud Jega (Editor, Daily Trust).

President reconstituted the NSWG in accordance with the NEITI Act, which reduced the board members to 15 from 28 and stipulated criteria for selection of members. The NSWG retains its multi-stakeholder identity, with representatives of the extractive industries, civil society, media, and the six geo-political zones of the country.

As the governing board of NEITI, the NSWG will provide strategic direction to the campaign for transparency and accountability in the management of revenues from oil, gas and mining sectors in Nigeria.

It will be recalled that the NEITI Act was signed into law on May 28, 2007, making Nigeria the only EITI-implementing country with an enabling law. According to a release by Mr. Olusegun Adeniyi, spokesman to the President, the new NSWG will be inaugurated on Tuesday, 29 January 2008.