PENGASSAN BRANCH CONFLICTS / CHEVRON / PART 1 OF 4

AN ELECTION NULLIFIED. WHAT NEXT?

BEFORE THE BALLOT, THERE WAS 21/21

Chevron branch officers wanted to resume negotiations. A dispute over the work rotation brought a deeper question into the open: who was speaking for the branch?

Twenty-one days on. Twenty-one days off. For the workers affected, 21/21 was a proposed change to their working lives. For the Chevron Branch Executive Committee, it also raised a question about representation. What position had been communicated to national leadership, and whose mandate stood behind it?

According to the branch account supplied to Save the Union, negotiations were due to begin on 28 August 2024. Two days earlier, the account says, PENGASSAN National President Festus Osifo postponed the talks until after a national team visited field locations to assess the proposed schedule. Branch officers say they asked their chairman to convey their wish to resume negotiations after the visit. His position, they say, was that he would wait for direction from the National Secretariat.

Then came 6 September. The branch account says Osifo sent Chevron management a memo directing it to commence the 21/21 schedule. The officers say the memo went to management without first being communicated to the branch executive or the wider membership. Their concern was both about the schedule and about how a decision affecting members had reached management.

Branch officers say the chairman initially declined their request for an executive meeting. They gathered signatures to invoke what they understood to be the two-thirds threshold for calling one. The meeting went ahead, and on 12 September 2024, the executive passed a vote of no confidence in the chairman. A letter to the General Secretary followed the next day. The court later read that letter as a request for ratification and agreed that the branch executive itself lacked authority to remove a sitting chairman.

The executive had put its grievance before the national leadership. What happened next reached far beyond the office of the chairman.

QUESTION FOR MEMBERS · When a proposed work schedule affects an entire branch, how should the union establish and communicate the members' position?

NEXT · PART 2 · Elected Officers Out. Eight Caretakers In.

Court record: NICN/LA/214/2025, judgment of 10 August 2026