PENGASSAN BRANCH CONFLICTS / NTL & NSL / PART 1 OF 6

MEMBERS ASKED FOR A CONGRESS ELECTION. WHAT FOLLOWED?

They wanted a direct voice in choosing their leaders. Why did that become the beginning of a conflict?

A member pays dues. Attends Congress. Raises a hand. Asks to help choose the people who will speak in their name.

That is a reasonable expectation of membership. The union's authority rests on the people it represents. Their participation should strengthen it.

Within the NNPC Trading Limited (NTL) and NNPC Shipping Limited (NSL) Branch of PENGASSAN, members wanted a Congress election rather than a Delegates' Conference. The supplied account of the 20 July 2026 congress minutes records that members had repeatedly communicated that preference through the branch WhatsApp group.

The demand was straightforward: let members participate directly in choosing their leaders.

Four Branch Executive Council (BEC) officers supported that option:

- Comrade Abdulbasit Abubakar, Branch Secretary
- Comrade Ahmad Usman, Industrial Relations Officer
- Comrade Bashar Isah, Public Relations Officer
- Comrade Bisola Arinde, Auditor

In their subsequent petition, the four said they were the only BEC officers who voted for a Congress election. They also alleged that, after taking that position, they were progressively excluded from election preparations and were not carried along in selecting delegates.

Consider what that allegation means for an ordinary member watching the process.

If elected officers believe their participation was restricted after they supported a different electoral method, what confidence does that give members who want to question a decision? What message does it send about the price of disagreement?

The petition does not, by itself, establish why the officers were excluded. Establishing that connection requires evidence. But the complaint goes to the heart of representation: **can members and their officers disagree with those administering an election and still receive equal treatment?**

A union should make that answer clear through its conduct. Members should know that raising a question will lead to an explanation, that a different view will receive a hearing, and that participation will be governed by rules everyone can see.

By 20 July, preparations were proceeding towards a Delegates' Conference. Members wanted to know who had chosen that method and whose authority supported the decision.

At Congress, they asked.

The response attributed to the Branch Chairperson, Comrade Amaoge Chukwudi, would expose the central argument in the conflict: where did the executive council's authority end, and where did the membership's authority begin?

Before asking members to accept an electoral process, leadership owes them an explanation of how it was chosen. Their dues sustain the institution. Their questions deserve answers.

For Save the Union, the standard we propose is clear: members should have a direct voice through secure member voting, with published eligibility rules, a transparent process and a credible route for challenging irregularities.

If that is the standard you want, assess our proposals and express your interest. Share this account with a comrade and ask: **what should meaningful participation look like in our union?**

TO BE CONTINUED / PART 2: "The BEC Is the Branch." Where Were the Members?

Explore the proposed alternative | Express Your Interest

SAVE THE UNION
Our Dues. Our Say. Our Vote!