



**STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS BY
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NATIONAL PRESIDENT**



**SENIOR STAFF ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES (SSANU)
AT THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE 54TH NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (NEC)
MEETING HELD AT – EKITI STATE UNIVERSITY, EKITI STATE
MARCH, 2026**

**Fellow Comrades,
Distinguished Members of NEC,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we convene for this NEC meeting, Nigeria continues to face profound and interconnected challenges that affect every sector of national life. From security to economic stability, from health to infrastructure, the realities confronting our nation remain difficult and, in many respects, have become more severe since our last engagement.

This address presents an updated overview of these developments and highlights the urgent need for decisive and coordinated action.

1. Security, National Stability and Human Tragedy

The security situation across our country remains deeply troubling. Incidents of terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, and communal violence continue to disrupt lives, weaken communities, and undermine national stability.

Recent tragic unfortunate incidents of bandits and terrorists overrunning communities in Sokoto, Kebbi, Zamfara, Katsina, Niger, Kwara, Adamawa and the deadly bombing in Maiduguri during the sacred month of Ramadan, have once again exposed the fragility of our security environment. At a time devoted to peace, reflection, and sacrifice, such violence is especially painful and unacceptable.

This is not merely a security concern. It is a national emergency that demands sustained and decisive action.

SSANU hereby calls on the Federal Government to intensify intelligence-driven security operations, strengthen inter-agency coordination, and adopt a more comprehensive approach that addresses the root causes of insecurity particularly poverty, unemployment, and social dislocation.

A nation cannot build a stable and functional university system in an atmosphere of fear. The safety of lives and property must remain the first responsibility of the state.

2. Education and the Safety of Learning Environments

The safety of our learning environments remains a matter of serious concern. While some efforts have been made in response to past incidents, schools and universities across the country continue to face significant and persistent risks.

In too many cases, institutions operate without adequate protection; leaving students, staff, and critical infrastructure exposed to threats that disrupt academic activities and erode confidence in the system.

Government must therefore move beyond reactive measures and take a more deliberate and coordinated approach to safeguarding our educational institutions. This requires strengthening institutional security frameworks, improving coordination with local communities and relevant agencies, and ensuring that campuses are properly equipped to prevent and respond to emerging threats.

Education cannot thrive in an atmosphere of fear. A secure learning environment is not optional it is fundamental to national development and the future of our country.

3. Healthcare System Under Pressure

Nigeria's healthcare system remains under significant and sustained strain. Across many public health facilities, the reality is one of inadequate personnel, limited equipment, and persistent shortages of essential supplies. The continued migration of healthcare professionals has further weakened the system.

This strain has been further compounded by ongoing industrial actions within the health sector. The prolonged strike by health workers in federal institutions has disrupted essential services across public hospitals, leaving patients stranded and exposing the fragility of the system.

SSANU therefore calls for urgent and deliberate reforms to strengthen primary healthcare delivery, improve working conditions, and restore confidence in the health sector.

A nation cannot safeguard the well-being of its people with a weakened and unstable health system. Strengthening healthcare must be treated as an immediate and non-negotiable priority.

4. Infrastructure, Power Supply and Environmental Challenges

At the same time, persistent weaknesses in basic infrastructure, particularly in power supply, water systems, and maintenance culture, continue to place a significant burden on institutions and communities. Many public facilities are compelled to operate under

unreliable conditions, driving up operational costs, reducing efficiency, and limiting their capacity to deliver essential services effectively.

This is not a temporary setback. It reflects a deeper structural challenge within our national infrastructure framework that must be addressed with urgency and sustained commitment.

SSANU therefore calls for a renewed and deliberate effort to strengthen national infrastructure through sustained investment in reliable power supply, improved water systems, and more effective maintenance practices that can support long-term service delivery.

No nation can achieve meaningful progress on a weak infrastructure base. Stable and functional public systems remain essential to sustainable development.

5. Agriculture, Food Security and Rising Cost of Living

The rising cost of living continues to place severe pressure on households, with food prices emerging as a major source of strain for many families. Across the country, access to affordable food is becoming increasingly difficult, deepening economic hardship and social vulnerability.

Food insecurity remains a serious concern, driven by persistent insecurity in farming communities, rising production costs, and inadequate support systems for agricultural activities.

Government must therefore adopt more deliberate and targeted measures to support farmers, stabilise food production, and strengthen distribution systems to ensure that food remains accessible and affordable for citizens.

A nation that cannot feed its people cannot sustain stability. Ensuring food security must remain a central priority of national policy.

6. Economic Conditions, Inflation and Workers' Welfare

Despite recent policy adjustments, the economic reality for many Nigerians remains difficult. Inflation continues to erode incomes, and the purchasing power of workers has declined significantly, leaving many unable to cope with rising living costs.

Across sectors, including the university system, workers are increasingly struggling to meet basic needs. This growing pressure is not only affecting individual livelihoods but also weakening morale, productivity, and overall institutional stability.



Government must therefore take more deliberate and coordinated steps to protect workers, stabilise the economy, and restore confidence in the system. Economic policies must translate into tangible relief for citizens, particularly those whose labour sustains critical national institutions.

An economy that diminishes the value of work cannot sustain stability. Protecting workers' welfare must remain central to national economic policy.

7. Governance, Policy Implementation and Accountability

A persistent challenge in our national development process remains the gap between policy formulation and implementation. Too often, agreements are reached but not faithfully executed, weakening confidence in public institutions and eroding trust among stakeholders. This pattern of inconsistency has far-reaching consequences. It undermines credibility, disrupts planning, and creates uncertainty across critical sectors, including education.

This must change...

SSANU therefore calls for stronger accountability, greater transparency, and a more disciplined approach to the implementation of government policies and agreements. Commitments must be honoured, timelines respected, and outcomes clearly defined.

Trust in governance is built on action, not promises. Consistent and accountable implementation must become the standard, not the exception.

8. SSANU's Role in National Development

SSANU remains firmly committed to national development through the dedicated contributions of its members, who play essential roles in administration, research coordination, and institutional management across Nigerian universities.

Across the world, non-teaching staff are recognised as critical enablers of functional and globally competitive university systems. In Nigeria, SSANU continues to uphold this internationally acknowledged role by ensuring that the administrative, financial, and the technical backbone of our institutions remains effective, stable, and responsive.

These contributions are central to the effective functioning of the university system and, by extension, to the broader development of the nation.

The Union stands ready to work constructively with government and relevant stakeholders in rebuilding institutions, strengthening systems, and advancing national progress.



A strong university system depends on the strength of its workforce. SSANU will continue to play its part in shaping a more stable, effective, and functional national system.

9. Inconclusive/Unending 2009 Renegotiation

The ongoing snail speed renegotiation exercise between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Non-Teaching staff unions of SSANU, NASU and NAAT has become another cog in the wheels of progress of our public universities. Government's inability to demonstrate fairness, equity and justice in the process has become deeply troubling. We are using this medium to categorically state in no uncertain terms that this meeting (54th) NEC shall rise with a clear resolution of what our Union SSANU and by extension JAC of NASU and SSANU will do in the coming days on this matter (The renegotiation).

10. Closing Reflection

Comrades, the challenges confronting our nation are significant, but they are not beyond our capacity. What is required at this moment is purposeful leadership, sustained commitment, and a clear sense of responsibility.

Nigeria cannot achieve meaningful and sustainable development without strengthening its institutions, protecting its workforce, and ensuring that policies are translated into tangible and measurable outcomes.

SSANU therefore calls on the Federal and State Governments to act with urgency, sincerity, and accountability in addressing these national challenges.

The direction of our nation will be defined not by the scale of our challenges, but by the resolve with which we respond to them.

Thank you.

Signed:

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National President, SSANU
National Internal Auditor, NLC
Chairman JAC of (SSANU/NASU)