The Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) is worried by the ongoing lingering crisis emanating from persistent undemocratic struggles for leadership positions in both National and State Houses of Assembly.

While the citizens expect the legislators to discharge such key fundamental functions as lawmaking, oversight, representation and constituency outreach to impact positively on their well-being and the nation’s democracy, the legislative arm has been thrown into endless crisis arising from disagreement over the elections and appointments into leadership positions in the National Assembly, which is fast becoming a priority over the legislators’ fundamental assignments.

We are aware of the crisis rocking All Progressives Congress (APC) arising from tussle for the leadership of the National Assembly, which if remains unresolved might feature in the State Houses of Assembly as it is presently taking turn in Benue State House of Assembly, where legislators engage each other in a battle of the fists.

While it is no more news that some citizens are less informed about legislative activities, the ongoing crisis if handled with levity, will not only project the legislature in bad light before the electorate, but also alter to a large extent important legislative activities and grossly result in under-performance of legislature.

As the citizens have hitherto suffered from era of bad governance, they are left in endless hope that the present administration would without doubt provide them with expected democratic dividend.
However, the crisis is currently hindering effective functionality of the administration, and may wrongly position the legislature before the public and lead to betray of trust that will further impair the already damaged reputation of the National Assembly.

As representatives of the people not only do legislators derive their mandate directly from the electorate, but also own the electorate proper accountability of their conducts in the legislature. Effective legislator must strike effort to contribute to good governance by performing important functions that are necessary to sustain democracy in this complex and diverse country, rather than needless leadership crises.

Since the legislature is fundamental designed to work through constructive inputs, positive relationship, and adequate supports among the members, the ongoing crisis, if remains persistent may impede effective collaboration, participation and team spirit among the members.

Although we understand as a global phenomenon, the aspiration of leading political party for leadership positions in the legislature, which featured in Nigeria’s political history in the 16 years prior to the emergence of APC as the leading party in the country. However, the ongoing development in the National Assembly could be traced to inability and weak internal control system by the leadership of APC to inculcate discipline in its members.

We believe that the most recent development leading to the emergence of new leaderships in the Assembly would serve as a lesson to future ruling party to prioritise adequate internal control and inculcate discipline in its members. We demand that such development should be embraced in the interest of nation’s democracy.

**PRAYERS**
We urge the legislators both at National and State Houses of Assembly to shun needless leadership crisis and focus on the development of well-articulated and constructive legislative agenda that will positive affect the well-being and standards of living of the citizens, and governance in the country.

The National Assembly has the sole responsibility to promptly address the ongoing crisis to avert unwarranted repetition and consequence in the State Houses of Assembly.

We strongly demand that the ongoing crises in the Assembly be addressed within the legislative Code of Conduct to promote value of excellence, professionalism in the legislators’ performance; and ensure civility and responsible conduct inside and outside of the Assembly commensurate with the trust placed in legislators by the electorate.

We call on the elected members to reach out to the aggrieved legislators and maintain peace with their party to avert conflict between private interests and official duties and uphold effective functionality of the Presidency in the best interest of the nation.

We charge the elected and appointed principal officers in the Assembly on constructive dialogue and reconciliation with the aggrieved and their political party opposition members, and collaboratively exercise their fundamental mandates—lawmaking, oversight and representation, in the interest of peace, harmony and democracy of the country.

CISLAC would be happy to continue to provide support to the members of National Assembly to enhance efficiency in the conduct of the core legislative duties—lawmaking, oversight, representation and constituency outreach.

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