

**Title of Article:** Empowering the Vulnerable: NLC's Struggle against Casualization in Nigeria" paper presented at the Nordic African Institute Conference on 'In formalizing Economies

**Author(s):** Osimiri Peter & Moses.M Duruji

**Outlet:** Uppsala Date of Publication: April 20-22, 2007

**Date:** 2014

**Abstract:** This paper explored the dynamics of the struggle of the Nigeria Labour Congress (the national labour body in Nigeria) against the state aided and abetted exploitation and enslavement of the Nigerian workers through the use of casualisation and contracting. While there are clearly spelt out constitutional guidelines and international conventions on the conditions of casual and contract employment, many employers in Nigeria continue to blatantly breach these legal provisions without any reprisals. This paper contend that the anomalous situation described above is so because there is a certain collusion between the political elites and corporate leaders \_something akin to the military-industrial complex- which makes it impossible for the Nigerian state or the appropriate government organ to levy necessary sanctions on erring employers and business owners. Unfortunately, while the NLC adopts the conventional strategies of persuasion and picketing to enforce compliance with the constitutional provisions on casualisation and contracts employments, the Nigerian government continues to express its solidarity with the erring employers by incrementally amending labour laws in the direction that provides greater latitude for the employers to exploit their employees. In the light of the fundamental power asymmetries between the labour union and the government-supported industrialist, which is to be expected given the neoliberal bias of the Obasanjo regime, the paper examines the critical question of the suitable strategies that must be adopted to reverse the status quo. Among other things, it agues that the Nigerian Labour Congress must employ transnational networks in its bid to combat

the “evil” alliance between the Nigerian state and the profit –hungry employers, who seize every available opportunity to exploit the vulnerable.