## PRESS STATEMENT FROM THE MEETING BETWEEN NBA PRESIDENT AND BRANCH CHAIRMEN AND LEADERS OF THE NORTHERN GEOPOLITICAL ZONE OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

We the undersigned individuals, who are Chairmen of the various branches of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) that make up the Northern Geopolitical Zone as defined in the NBA Constitution 2015, and other senior members of the Bar have today Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2020 in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, met with the NBA President, Mr. Olumide Akpata and the National Officers of the NBA. We have unanimously agreed to support his leadership of the NBA, and we hereby restate our true allegiance to the NBA and disassociate ourselves from the "New NBA" or any splitter group whatsoever making the waves in recent weeks as a new association/body of lawyers in Nigeria.

We understand that the NBA has historically and in recent times been fraught with several challenges but we are indeed assured that the NBA under the leadership of Mr. Olumide Akpata will surmount these challenges and birth an all-inclusive Bar that will work for all Lawyers in Nigeria regardless of any part of the divide one may belong.

We were gratified to hear the NBA President during his inaugural address restate that the Bar that he wants to lead henceforth is one that is united on all fronts and which recognises that our diversity is our greatest strength. At the meeting today, Mr. Akpata reassured us that his administration is very keen on ensuring that we not have only a united Bar but also an indivisible one, and we verily believe in him.

We therefore urge all lawyers not only of the Northern Geopolitical Zone, including those behind the establishment of the NNBA but indeed all legal practitioners in Nigeria to please come together to support Mr. Olumide Akpata and the new national officers to ensure that they deliver on all their core mandates whilst indeed putting the rule of law, the welfare and capacity development of our members at the fore front.

We thank the NBA President, Mr Olumide Akpata and all the national officers of the NBA for having this meeting with us as one of their first official acts after their inauguration last Friday, which is only indicative of the value they place on the need for an all-inclusive Bar and we wish them a very successful tenure and also reassure Mr President of our total support for his administration and pledge our allegiance to the NBA at large.

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