



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT: Plot 1102, Muhammed Buhari Way, Cadastral Zone A00, Central Business District, Abuja Nigerian Tel: +234 800 333 1111
www.nigerianbar.org.ng

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE MEETING OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (NEC) OF THE NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION (NBA) HELD AT MUHAMMED INDIMI INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE, MAIDUGURI, BORNO STATE, ON THURSDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2026

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The National Executive Council (NEC) of the Nigerian Bar Association (NBA) held its statutory quarterly meeting on Thursday, 5 February 2026, in Maiduguri, Borno State.
- 1.2 The meeting was attended by National Officers of the Association, Past National Officers, Senior Advocates of Nigeria, Branch Chairmen and Secretaries, Chairmen and Secretaries of Sections and Fora, Co-opted NEC Members, and Observers from across the country.
- 1.3 NEC deliberated extensively on issues affecting the legal profession, the administration of justice, the rule of law, national security, governance, and the welfare of legal practitioners in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on young lawyers.
- 1.4 Since the last NEC meeting held in Benin City, Edo State, the NBA has remained actively engaged in national discourse on governance, security, the protection of fundamental rights, judicial independence, and professional regulation.

2. AMENDMENT OF THE LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT

- 2.1 NEC noted the active participation of the NBA at the public hearing conducted by the National Assembly on the proposed Legal Practitioners Act (Amendment) Bill.
- 2.2 The Association clarified widespread misconceptions concerning the Bill and emphasized that the drafting process was collaborative, involving the Office of the Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation, the Body of Benchers, and other critical stakeholders.
- 2.3 NEC reaffirmed that the Bill strengthens the NBA's central regulatory role, including increased representation on the Body of Benchers and the establishment of an Ethics, Adherence, and Enforcement Committee. The proposed Committee is empowered to:
 - a. Investigate complaints against legal practitioners;
 - b. Inspect law offices and professional records;
 - c. Prosecute cases of professional misconduct;
 - d. Advise on ethical standards; and
 - e. Encourage alternative dispute resolution for minor complaints.

NATIONAL OFFICERS:

Mazi Afam Josiah Osigwe, SAN - **President**

Dr. Mobolaji Ojibara - **General Secretary**; Sebastine Anyia - **1st Vice-President**; Mrs. Bolatumi Olasunbo Animashaun - **2nd Vice President**; Zainab Aminu Garba - **3rd Vice-President**;
Blessing Imo Udofa-Poromon - **Treasurer**; Nyada Auta - **Welfare Secretary**; Bridget Ijeoma Edokwe - **Publicity Secretary**;
Henry Barnabas Ehi - **Assistant General Secretary**; Ebilere Emmanuella Ekpese - **Assistant Publicity Secretary**

- 2.4 NEC reiterated its support for key provisions of the Bill, including:
- a. Representation of the NBA President on the Legal Practitioners Privileges Committee (LPPC);
 - b. Decentralisation of disciplinary proceedings;
 - c. Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD);
 - d. A two-year post-call training (pupillage) period;
 - e. Retention of the mandatory Stamp and Seal regime.
- 2.5 NEC emphasized that regulatory authority flows from NBA regulations and that the Bill does not transfer the power to issue practising licences to the Body of Benchers or the Attorney-General of the Federation.
- 2.6 Concerns regarding erosion of Bar autonomy were addressed, with NEC affirming that the Bill codifies and strengthens professional self-regulation, aligns Nigerian legal practice with global best practices, and enhances public confidence.
- 2.7 NEC further noted ongoing engagements with the Attorney General of the Federation aimed at refining aspects of the Bill, including:
- i. Adjustment of mandatory pupillage from two (2) years to one (1) year;
 - ii. Review of eligibility for the rank of Senior Advocate of Nigeria from fifteen (15) years to ten (10) years post-call; and
 - iii. Clarification of NBA nomination rights to the LPPC.
- 2.8 NEC reaffirmed that increased representation, ethics enforcement, CPD requirements, and other measures consolidate professional self-regulation while modernizing the profession has indeed become necessary.

3. DEFENCE OF THE RULE OF LAW: MOTOR VEHICLE TINTED GLASS POLICY

- 3.1 NEC considered the enforcement of the motor vehicle tinted glass permit policy by the Nigeria Police Force and noted the constitutional and procedural concerns arising therefrom.
- 3.2 The NBA challenged the legality of the policy before the Federal High Court, Abuja, on the grounds that it lacked statutory authority, constituted unlawful revenue generation, and imposed undue hardship on citizens.
- 3.3 NEC noted that engagement with the Inspector-General of Police resulted in the suspension of enforcement pending the determination of the suit.
- 3.4 NEC called on all NBA Branches and the Human Rights Committee to provide legal support to affected citizens and resolved to initiate committal proceedings against any officer who disobeys court orders.

- 3.5 NEC reaffirmed that judicial orders are binding and that any executive action in defiance thereof undermines the rule of law, as consistently affirmed by the Supreme Court.

4. SECURITY AND PROTECTION OF LIFE

- 4.1 NEC strongly condemned the resurgence of violent criminal activities in the Federal Capital Territory, which led to the tragic deaths of Ms. Chinemerem Pascalina Chuwumeziem, a nurse, and Princess Chigbo Mediatrix, a legal practitioner and former Treasurer of the NBA Abuja Branch.
- 4.2 NEC described the incidents as symptomatic of a deteriorating security situation and called on the Honourable Minister of the FCT and the Nigeria Police Force to take immediate and coordinated action to dismantle criminal networks.
- 4.3 NEC demanded transparent investigations, arrest, and prosecution of perpetrators to restore public confidence in security institutions.
- 4.4 A minute of silence was observed in honour of Princess Chigbo Mediatrix.

5. SUPPORT FOR YOUNG LAWYERS AND MEMBERS' WELFARE

- 5.1 NEC ratified the launch of the Kanu Agabi, CON, SAN, Young Lawyers Co-Working Space at the NBA National Secretariat, Abuja.
- 5.2 The facility, funded by Chief James Onoja, SAN, Chairman of the NBA Welfare Committee, provides young lawyers with access to professional workspaces, mentoring, and collaborative opportunities.
- 5.3 NEC acknowledged the honour accorded to Chief Kanu Agabi, CON, SAN, in recognition of his distinguished career, mentorship, and commitment to ethical advocacy.
- 5.4 NBA Branches were encouraged to replicate similar initiatives nationwide in collaboration with Young Lawyers' Fora.

6. COUNTER-TERRORISM AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS

- 6.1 NEC expressed concern over a proposed Bill redefining terrorism by removing ideological, political, or religious elements and expanding mandatory death penalties to kidnapping-related offences.
- 6.2 NEC noted that kidnapping is already criminalised under federal and state laws and that mandatory death sentences for ancillary offences offend principles of proportionality and criminal jurisprudence.

- 6.3 NEC recommended:
- i. Restricting terrorism classification to organised criminal networks with coercive intent;
 - ii. Replacing mandatory death sentences with discretionary sentencing;
 - iii. Providing clear statutory defences; and
 - iv. Harmonising federal and state criminal laws.
- 6.4 NEC reaffirmed its commitment to legislative reforms that enhance security while safeguarding fundamental rights and offered technical assistance to the National Assembly.

7. UNVEILING OF THE 2026 NBA ANNUAL GENERAL CONFERENCE THEME AND LOGO

- 7.1 NEC noted that preparations for the 2026 Annual General Conference (AGC) commenced on 16 January 2026 with the unveiling of the Conference theme and logo.
- 7.2 The theme, “Beyond Limits,” calls on the legal profession to transcend conventional boundaries, embrace innovation, and respond decisively to evolving demands of justice and governance.
- 7.3 The Conference is scheduled to hold in August 2026 in Port Harcourt, Rivers State.
- 7.4 The Chairman of the Conference Planning Committee, Mr. Mohammed Abdul, SAN, assured members of the Committee’s commitment to delivering a world-class conference.
- 7.5 The Conference logo, depicting a slanted mountain peak, symbolises determination, resilience, and the pursuit of excellence beyond perceived limits.

8. INAUGURATION OF THE ELECTORAL COMMITTEE OF THE NBA (ECNBA)

- 8.1 NEC noted the inauguration of the Electoral Committee of the Nigerian Bar Association (ECNBA) to conduct the 2026 National Officers’ elections.
- 8.2 The Committee is chaired by Mr. Aham Eke-Ejelam, SAN, with Ibrahim Aliyu Nasarawa as Secretary, and Muhammad M. Nuhu, Uju Okafor, and Ume Maduka as Members.
- 8.3 NEC approved the appointment of Hadiza Nura Alfa (Minna Branch) and Umimke Helen Akpana (Ogoja Branch) as additional members to complete the Committee.
- 8.4 Members of the ECNBA were reminded of their obligation to uphold transparency, neutrality, integrity, and professionalism.

9. DISCLAIMER ON IMPROPER PATRONAGE AND INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

9.1 NEC reaffirmed the Association's unwavering commitment to integrity and the rule of law following reports of the purported appointment of Abdulrasheed Maina, who was convicted for stealing over N2 billion in pension funds, as 'Grand Patron of NBA Garki Branch' by the Chairman of NBA Garki Branch, Anthony Bamidele Ojo, as well as public commentary by a Branch Chairman on a matter pending before the Supreme Court. The NBA categorically disclaimed the appointment, condemned the conduct as a grave breach of professional ethics, and commenced disciplinary proceedings against the Chairman involved.

9.2 NEC reiterated that the Association will not lend its platform to condone corruption, influence judicial proceedings, or launder the image of convicted persons, and urged all Branches, Sections, Fora, and organs of the NBA to desist from appointing non-lawyers or convicted persons as patrons, or conferring awards outside properly constituted Association events. NEC directed the Suspended Chairman of the NBA Garki Branch, Mr. Bamidele Ojo, was hereby directed to immediately withdraw any purported appointment of Mr. Abdulrasheed Maina as a Patron of the Branch and to forthwith cease and desist from issuing statements, comments, or representations on behalf of, or in support of, Mr. Maina or any other litigant in respect of cases pending in court. Although disciplinary proceedings was commenced against Mr. Anthony Bamidele Ojo, the suspended Chair of NBA Garki Branch, for actions inconsistent with the Constitution of the NBA, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and the core values of the legal profession. NEC resolved that the National Executive revisit the matter and use discretion to withdraw disciplinary proceedings if the chairman is indeed remorseful.

9.3 NEC approves the constitution of a Committee to develop and recommend comprehensive procedures and guidelines for the appointment of patrons and the conferment of awards by all Branches, Sections, Fora, and organs of the Association, with a view to safeguarding the institutional integrity of the Nigerian Bar Association. The Committee shall be constituted as follows:

- i. Ibrahim Lawal - Chairman
- ii. Rashidat Muhammed - Secretary
- iii. Dr N.A Duson Member

10. LEGISLATIVE INTEGRITY AND TAX REFORM ACTS

10.1 NEC ratified the NBA's intervention following discrepancies between tax laws passed by the National Assembly and the versions gazetted.

10.2 NEC welcomed the directive for re-gazetting the Nigeria Tax Act 2025, Nigeria Tax Administration Act 2025, Joint Revenue Board Act 2025, and Nigeria Revenue Service Act 2025 to reflect accurate legislative texts.

11. JUDICIAL ENGAGEMENTS AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP

11.1 NEC noted NBA's engagement at the opening of the 2025/2026 Federal High Court Legal Year and highlighted concerns relating to court sittings, judicial independence, case backlog, and infrastructure deficits.

11.2 NEC reaffirmed the importance of ethical conduct, judicial inspections of detention facilities, and enhanced Bench-Bar collaboration.

12. INTRODUCTION OF THE NBA DIGITAL SEAL SYSTEM

12.1 NEC approved the introduction of an end-to-end NBA Digital Seal System to complement the physical Stamp and Seal.

12.2 The system will enable lawyers to affix secure digital signatures to electronic documents.

12.3 NEC approved complimentary digital seal packs for lawyers between zero and seven (0-7) years post-call, while general pricing shall be subject to NEC approval.

13. IRREGULAR PROMOTIONS IN THE NIGERIA POLICE FORCE

13.1 NEC expressed concern over allegations of irregular and biased promotion practices within the Nigeria Police Force.

13.2 NEC resolved that promotions must be strictly merit-based and in accordance with established procedures.

14. VISITS TO POLITICIANS BY JUDICIAL OFFICERS

14.1 NEC reiterated that judicial officers must avoid association with politically exposed persons.

14.2 NEC warned that conduct capable of creating a perception of bias undermines judicial integrity and public confidence.

15. ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF ELECTION RESULTS

15.1 NEC expressed concern over the Senate's rejection of mandatory electronic transmission of election results.

15.2 NEC urged legislative reforms to guarantee transparency and electoral credibility.

16. CONTINUED DETENTION OF MR. BRIGHT EMEKA NGENE

- 16.1 NEC expressed grave concern over the prolonged detention of Mr. Bright Emeka Ngene due to repeated delays in hearing his appeal.
- 16.2 NEC observed that the repeated recusals have caused undue hardship and prolonged detention, and called for urgent steps to ensure that the appeal is heard promptly in the interest of justice.
- 16.3 NEC emphasized that the matter raises serious concerns relating to the protection of the rights of a legal practitioner and the need to uphold confidence in the administration of justice.
- 16.4 NEC approved the constitution of a Seven-member Committee chaired by Mr Sammie Somiari, SAN, to engage the Chief Judge of Enugu State. Members of the Committee shall be:
1. Sammie Somiari SAN - Chair
 2. Emeka Obegolu, SAN
 3. Abdul Mohammed, SAN
 4. Musa Attah SAN
 5. Chidi Aroh, Esq
 6. Venatius C. Odo, Esq
 7. Osato Uwagboe - Secretary
- 16.5 NEC resolved that failure to fix a hearing date within two weeks will result in further actions, including court boycotts and legal challenges.

17. EXCESSIVE SPENDING IN NBA ELECTIONS

- 17.1 NEC expressed deep concern over the growing trend of excessive spending by aspirants in the forthcoming NBA National Officers elections. Council observed that the monetization of the electoral process undermines the integrity of the Association and violates constitutional provisions.
- 17.2 NEC condemned excessive spending by aspirants and warned against inducements.
- 17.3 NEC reaffirmed strict enforcement of electoral provisions of the NBA Constitution.

18. RECONSTITUTION OF COUNCIL OF LEGAL EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVES

- 18.1 NEC approved the reconstitution of the NBA representatives to the Council of Legal Education following the expiration of the current tenure.

19. RISING INCIDENCE OF FAKE LAWYERS

- 19.1 NEC expressed concern over impersonation and unlawful use of NBA stamps and seals.

19.2 NEC commended vigilance by members and urged continued collaboration with law enforcement agencies.

20. STRENGTHENING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF THE BAR

20.1 NEC reaffirmed its commitment to professional regulation, judicial independence, and the rule of law.

20.2 NEC noted that the Association remains deliberate in advancing professional regulation and capacity building through initiatives such as Mandatory Continuing Professional Development, aimed at ensuring competence, ethical discipline, and global relevance among practitioners.

20.3 NEC resolved to remain principled, proactive, and firm in the defence of legality and constitutional governance.

Issued this 5th day of February 2026



Mazi Afam Osigwe, SAN
President



Dr. Mobolaji Ojibara
General Secretary