



NIGERIAN BAR ASSOCIATION IMO STATE BRANCHES

SECRETARIAT:

Bar Centre,
Old High Court Complex,
Orlu Road, Owerri, Imo State.
14th August, 2026

The Hon. Justice M. O. Kekere-Ekun, GCON
Chief Justice of Nigeria and Chairman,
National Judicial Council,
Supreme Court Complex,
Three Arms Zone,
Abuja.

My Lord,

**RE: THE APPOINTMENT OF A SUBSTANTIVE CHIEF JUDGE OF IMO
STATE – AN URGENT APPEAL FOR JUDICIAL STABILITY AND
INSTITUTIONAL CONTINUITY**

1. We, the undersigned Chairmen of the Nigerian Bar Association Branches in Imo State, namely Owerri, Orlu, Mbaise, Okigwe, Oru-Oguta and Mbano/Etiti Branches, respectfully write to Your Lordship on behalf of our respective Branches and the wider legal community in Imo State concerning the prolonged absence of a substantive Chief Judge of the State.
2. We commend the National Judicial Council for the pivotal constitutional role it continues to play in safeguarding the independence, integrity and institutional coherence of the Nigerian Judiciary.
3. It is against this background that we respectfully urge the Council to give expeditious and favourable consideration towards the appointment of a substantive Chief Judge for Imo State.
4. Imo State has, regrettably, operated without a substantive Chief Judge since November 2024. While we acknowledge and appreciate the constitutional and administrative arrangements made to ensure that the judicial machinery of the State does not grind to a halt, the prolonged continuation of an acting arrangement cannot, in our respectful view, be regarded as an adequate substitute for the stability, permanence and institutional authority that attend the office of a substantive Chief Judge.

Dr. Mazi Udegblelem, Esq.
Chairman, Owerri Branch

Chief O.J.O. Okolie, Esq.
Chairman, Orlu Branch

Chief J. N. Nwawudu, Esq.
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Chief K. C. Nwokorie Esq.
Chairman, Mbano-Etiti Branch

Sir. Chukwuemeka Okoro, Esq.
Chairman, Oru-Oguta Branch

5. The office of the Chief Judge is not merely ceremonial or administrative. It occupies a central position in the architecture of the State Judiciary, with significant responsibilities touching upon judicial administration, allocation of judicial work, institutional discipline, effective deployment of judicial resources, coordination of the courts and the overall maintenance of public confidence in the administration of justice.
6. The continued absence of a substantive occupant inevitably raises legitimate concerns regarding institutional continuity and long-term judicial stability.
7. More importantly, certainty and stability in the administration of justice are indispensable components of the rule of law. The Judiciary must not only be independent; it must also be perceived as institutionally settled, predictable and capable of providing enduring leadership.
8. An acting arrangement, however competently administered, is by its very nature transitional. Where such an arrangement becomes protracted, the distinction between temporary stewardship and substantive institutional leadership becomes increasingly significant.
9. We therefore respectfully submit that the present situation has endured for considerably longer than should ordinarily be contemplated in the interest of the effective administration of justice in Imo State.
10. The legal profession, litigants, judicial officers, court users and, indeed, the general public are entitled to the assurance that the State Judiciary possesses stable and substantive leadership.
11. In the circumstances, we respectfully urge the National Judicial Council to consider and act with the urgency which the circumstances demand, and to take all necessary steps within its constitutional limit towards the appointment of a substantive Chief Judge of Imo State.

12. We respectfully trust that Your Lordship and the distinguished members of the National Judicial Council will give this appeal the utmost consideration it deserves and act expeditiously in the overriding interest of justice, judicial stability and the people of Imo State.

please accept, My Lord, the assurances of our highest regards and professional respect.
Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of the Nigerian Bar Association Branches in Imo State:

Signed:

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